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AN
INTRODUCTION
TO
PHILO JUDÆUS
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To the Staff of
THE JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF AMERICA
who in person demonstrate
that Christian Ethic has its source
in Judaism

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PREFACE

PUBLICATION of a small book on Philo needs no apology. In all the great body of literature devoted to him and his thought, there is no satisfactory work which can be given the general reader to introduce him to the subject. What brief studies exist are antiquated by recent researches, and in no case were written to serve the double purpose of helping the beginner to make a start in an intelligent reading of Philo and of presenting what is now the point of view from which all study of Philo must, whether in agreement or disagreement, depart.

The problem of the relation of early Christianity to its environment, which has engrossed historians of religion, and which conservative scholars—conservative technically as well as theologically—have tended to belittle or neglect, is the great problem of the next generation of students in the field. It has been easy to dismiss the work of historians of religion who have been content simply to list pagan parallels to the New Testament, so long as conclusions of great importance were drawn from mere similarities between early Christian ideas and those of religions scattered from India to Britain. If we are to learn about Christianity from non-Christian material, what we need is not parallels but bridges, demonstration of how ideas could have reached and become incorporated into early Christianity from sources other than orthodox

Judaism and the direct teachings of Jesus. It is apparent that within a few years of the death of Jesus early Christianity had appropriated the ideals that salvation is freedom from the "world" or from the "bondage of the flesh," that the means of grace are sacramental instead of sacrificial, and that the savior is at once a personality and a cosmic spiritual force, to name only three of the most important contrasts between hellenistic Christianity and normative Judaism. In trying to reconstruct that transition the sober historian has been rather confused than illuminated by such parallels as have been collected, for example, in the writings of the Jesus-Myth school. Certainly these parallels must all be rejected as irrelevant until they, or some of them, can be shown not only to have resembled but to have been within the range of thought of such a man as Paul himself. Rapid assimilation by early Christianity of such a complex of ideas as mere parallels have presented would have blasted the early group to atoms.

Yet the fact remains that Christianity did very early become hellenized, and the parallels still are as striking as ever. Is there a bridge to be found, over which these notions, or some of them, could have reached the early Christians already in so organized and acceptable a form that their adoption would not have shattered the early faithful into countless groups who disagreed about what should be borrowed? Such a bridge, I have long been convinced, exists in hellenistic Judaism. Here for three centuries there seems to

have been a group, not simply localized in Alexandria, which developed what finally came to fruit in Philo, a Judaism which had acquired a strong sense of orthodoxy as to what could be assimilated and what not, and whose orthodoxy was, apart from the all-powerful force of the person of Jesus, amazingly like Christianity in its basic points of view, methodology, and resemblances to paganism. It was, in the main, still loyally Jewish, and would, as did the hellenistic synagogues in Jerusalem, take the lead in persecuting a new group who under the inspiration of a new savior, turned the guns of hellenistic Jewish logic back upon the Jews themselves to level the requirement of legal observance. But the guns were the product of hellenistic Jews, and hellenistic Christianity would have been impossible without them.

All this has yet to be demonstrated. But it is obvious that only those will be able to see the force of the arguments, when they are presented, who know, as lamentably few in the field now do, the Philo who has been emerging in recent researches. This little book has been written for those, young and old, who wish to be able to pass upon this matter.

The new Bibliography of Philo¹ makes the necessity of long quotations of titles unnecessary. After each title not fully cited I have indicated the number of

1. *The Politics of Philo Judæus, Practice and Theory* by Erwin R. Goodenough, *Together with a General Bibliography of Philo*, by Howard L. Goodhart and Erwin R. Goodenough, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1938—hereafter referred to as the *Bibliography*.

that title in the Bibliography. Works of Philo are quoted in the abbreviations listed in the Bibliography, 131–136, and also in my By Light, Light, xiii f. The translations of Philo are my own revision of earlier translations, especially, where yet published, of those by F. G. Colson in the Loeb series.

E. R. G.

AN INTRODUCTION TO PHILO JUDÆUS

CHAPTER I

METHOD

To introduce any character from the ancient world to a modern audience is difficult from many points of view. To introduce an ancient man of thought is still more difficult. But to present a man whose thought was as complicated and is as much the subject of controversy as that of Philo Judæus of Alexandria is most difficult of all. Those of us who have worked long at his writings are the only ones who can hope to make such an introduction, and we are the ones most aware of the difficulty. It is not that he speaks a language which only experts can understand, but that his writings have been differently understood by equally capable specialists themselves, to the point that it is a question if any of us know him sufficiently so that we can without effrontery introduce him. For if I introduce a man to Mr. Jones it is understood that I know Mr. Jones myself. I cannot let it be assumed that I profess to know Philo.

It is to this problem of how we can know Philo, if we ever can, or in what sense we may speak of knowing him, that we must devote this first chapter.

There are a few general points about his life on which everyone is agreed. Of his ancestry we know nothing. We know only that he lived in Alexandria at

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the beginning of the Christian era, and, since he called himself an “old man” in a document describing events of A.D. 40, we assume that he was born about 25 B.C. Since he survived that year long enough at least to write two long treatises, we may say he died perhaps between 45 and 50 A.D. From these dates themselves the importance of Philo is indicated, not only for Judaism, since we have so little Jewish literature of this date, but also for Christianity, since, if he can be taken in any sense as typical of the Jews of the Roman world—a highly disputed point in itself—he gives us a priceless picture of the Judaism on which Christians built, or from which they departed, in the gentile world.

Philo must have come from several generations of wealth, a family with a position much like that of the Rothschilds at the end of the nineteenth century. He himself says that life without slave attendance would be unthinkable, and his brother Alexander was one of the richest men in the ancient world. Such fortunes were rarely of sudden acquisition in Alexandria, at least fortunes with the political and social alliances of this family, for when Herod Agrippa was at the lowest point of the apparently hopeless vagabondage of his earlier years, Alexander lent to him, because he admired the spirit of Agrippa’s wife Cypros, the king’s ransom of two hundred thousand drachmæ. Large a sum as this was, it must have been only a small portion of Alexander’s fortune, since Alexander was under no compulsion to advance the money, could have had no real hope of its ever being re-

turned, and so could not have risked a large part of his capital. A still more dramatic evidence of the wealth of Alexander is the fact that, as Josephus tells us, the silver and gold plates which covered the nine gates of the temple at Jerusalem were the gift of Alexander, a gift which, even allowing for Josephus' exaggeration in dimensions, must have been incredibly valuable. It is no wonder that in another passage Josephus says that Alexander was "foremost among his contemporaries at Alexandria both for his family and his wealth." In the Roman world great wealth involved great public obligation: hence it is not surprising that Alexander had an official title, "Alabarch," which meant that he was the person responsible to the Romans for the collection of taxes, though whether for the taxes of all Alexandria or only for those of the Jews does not appear. He was also the steward (*ἐπίτροπος*) of Claudius' mother Antonia, and the personal friend (*φίλος ἀρχαῖος*) of Claudius. During the riots Gaius had imprisoned him, but Claudius, on coming to the throne, released him. It is quite probable that Alexander was a Roman citizen. He married a son, Marcus, to Berenice, daughter of Herod.

Another son of Alexander, Tiberius Julius Alexander, deserted his religion and had a political career even more brilliant than his father's. We first hear of him in the reign of Claudius, when he was *epistrategos* in Egypt. Our next record of him is when he was appointed Roman procurator in Palestine at about A.D. 46, where he seems to have been a severe but ac-

ceptable ruler. He was later made prefect of Egypt by Nero, and there played the part of Flaccus himself in turning the legions of Rome upon the Jews during one of the riots, with the result, says Josephus, that fifty thousand Jews were killed. His appointment as prefect, and probably that of procurator, had carried with it the rank of a Roman knight, if he had not received it before. He assisted Corbulo in the expedition into Armenia, in the course of which, as *inlustris eques Romanus*, along with a nephew of Corbulo of minor age, he was considered adequate hostage for the safety of King Tiridates himself. Roman historians especially stress Alexander's part in supporting Vespasian's candidacy for the throne. It appears that the eastern army had declared for Vespasian, but that Tiberius Alexander in Egypt was the first Roman governor to recognize him and formally to swear the legions and populace of a province to his support, so that Vespasian's accession was subsequently dated from this recognition rather than from the day of the army's acclamation. In our last glimpse of Tiberius Alexander he is again in Palestine, this time during the great war against Jerusalem. Tiberius Alexander is subordinate to Titus, of course, but is apparently second in command to Titus alone, a position for which Josephus says he "was well qualified both by age and experience." It is possible that Juvenal refers to a statue of him at Rome.¹

In this family of wealth and devotion to public interest there is no reason to think that Philo was an exception. Although we know only a single incident

from his life, that incident shows that he was a man who was a natural political leader of Alexandrian Jews. To this incident we shall return in a later chapter. Here it is enough to say that, in a time when imperial madness had provoked a pogrom which threatened to wipe the Jews completely from Alexandria, Philo was appointed head of the legation to visit the emperor Gaius and plead their cause. In the documents which describe that series of events, Philo tells little of himself except what he did and said. In the rest of his writings there are only a few autobiographical passages, but upon them we are completely dependent for any guesses we may make as to his personal character and way of living; for references to Philo in other authors are only to his writings, where he is introduced as "the learned Jew," the Platonist, or the Pythagorean, but no personal details are given. Even Josephus makes only such general statements.

Of more value than all the other statements together where Philo refers to himself is a passage at the beginning of the third book of his treatise *On the Special Laws*, as follows:

There was once a time when by devoting myself to philosophy and to contemplation of the world and its parts I achieved the enjoyment of that Mind which is truly beautiful, desirable, and blessed; for I lived in constant communion with sacred utterances and teachings, in which I greedily and insatiably rejoiced. No base or worldly thoughts occurred to me, nor did I grovel for glory, wealth, or bodily comfort, but I seemed ever to be borne aloft in the heights in a rapture of soul, and to

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accompany sun, moon, and all heaven and the universe in their revolutions. Then, ah, then peeping downwards from the ethereal heights and directing the eye of my intelligence as from a watchtower, I regarded the untold spectacle of all earthly things, and reckoned myself happy at having forcibly escaped the calamities of mortal life.

And yet there lurked near me that most grievous of evils, Envy, with its hatred of all that is fair ($\delta\mu\sigma\delta\kappa\alpha\lambda\oslash\phi\theta\acute{o}\nu\varsigma$), which suddenly fell upon me, and did not cease forcibly dragging upon me until it had hurled me down into the vast sea of political cares ($\mu\acute{e}\gamma\alpha\pi\acute{e}\lambda\alpha\gamma\varsigma\tau\acute{w}n\acute{e}\nu\pi\acute{o}\lambda\it{i}\tau\acute{e}\iota\phi\acute{r}\o\eta\tau\acute{i}\delta\omega\nu$), where I am still tossed about and unable even so much as to rise to the surface. But though I groan at my fate, I still struggle on, for I have, implanted in my soul from early youth, a desire for education which ever has pity and compassion upon me, and lifts me up and elevates me. This it is by which I can sometimes raise my head, and by which, though the penetration of the eyes of my soul is dimmed by the mists of alien concerns, I can yet cast about with them in some measure upon my surroundings, while I long to suck the breast of life pure and unmixed with evils. And if unexpectedly there is temporary quiet and calm in the political tumults, I become winged and skim the waves, barely flying, and am blown along by the breezes of understanding ($\acute{e}\pi\acute{o}\sigma\tau\acute{\eta}\mu\eta$), which often persuades me to run away as it were for a holiday with her from my pitiless masters, who are not only men but also the great variety of practical affairs which are deluged upon me from all sides like a torrent. Still, even in such a condition, I ought to thank God that while I am inundated I am not sucked down into the depths. Rather, though in

despair of any good hope I had considered the eyes of my soul to be incapacitated, now I open them and am flooded with the light of wisdom, so that I am not abandoned for the whole of my life to darkness. And so, behold, I dare not only read the sacred expositions of Moses, but even, with a passion for understanding, I venture to examine each detail, and to disclose and publish what is not known to the multitude.²

With this goes another statement:

For many a time have I myself forsaken friends and kinsfolk and country and come into a wilderness, to give my attention to some subject demanding contemplation, and derived no advantage from doing so, but my mind scattered or bitten by passion has gone off to matters of the contrary kind. Sometimes, on the other hand, amid a vast throng I have a collected mind. God has dispersed the crowd that besets the soul and taught me that a favorable and unfavorable condition are not brought about by differences of place, but by God who moves and leads the car of the soul in whatever way he pleases.³

Again Philo says:

“Flee into Mesopotamia,” that is into the middle of the swollen river of life, and take heed lest you be swept away and drowned; rather stand absolutely rigid, and repel with might the torrent of concerns as it pours in upon you from above, from either side, and from everywhere.⁴

In view of the other passages we can see that this last one, while not a reference to Philo’s own life, would

have been understood to have been such by his contemporaries who knew him. By profession he was, at least during a large part of his life, a *politicus*, a word which I must keep in the Latin because our word “politician” has been ruined. That he was a *politicus* who looked beyond the mere affairs of state appears in these passages, and to this dualism in his point of view we shall return. But we must not take the intensity of these passages too literally. Philo battled with the flood of human concerns for his inner spiritual integrity, but he was a good swimmer and one who really loved the water.

For Philo's difficulty lay not in his being narrow, but in his many-sidedness. His problem was how to find room for his multifarious interests, and while reading his writings we must always recall that in Philo we have one who was intimately in touch with all aspects of the teeming life of Alexandria. In spite of the preoccupation with metaphysics in his writings, he was an habitué of the theaters, the games, and the banquets of Alexandria. He was a critical observer of the athletics of the day, and speaks with almost an expert's insight about contests he has seen where the victor was not the more skillful boxer, but the man who was in better physical training, as we should say, to “take punishment.” He tells of being at chariot races where excitement ran so high that some of the spectators rushed into the course and were killed. He describes the enthusiasm of the crowd at a now lost play of Euripides when some brilliant lines in praise of freedom were recited. At the theater, too,

he has "often" noticed how differently music affects different people, the same tune moving some to exclamations of praise, leaving others unmoved, and driving still others out of the theater altogether in disgust with their fingers stopping their ears. When he attended banquets he had to watch himself carefully, "take reason along," as he expresses it, or, as frequently happened, he would become a helpless slave to the pleasures of food and drink. With what satisfaction he recalls the banquets he attended where he did *not* thus lose control of himself!⁵

An interesting testimony to Philo's character is found in a fragment which tells of a remark made by Philo's wife. She was conspicuous in her social environment for not wearing the heavy gold ornaments of wealthy women of the time. When she was asked why she did not wear them she replied: "The virtue of her husband is sufficient ornament for the wife."⁶

Even though nothing final can be concluded, it is worth suggesting, what Mr. Howard Goodhart has pointed out to me, that Philo was probably older than his brother Alexander. Alexander's son, Tiberius Julius Alexander, was at the height of his political career in his sixties and seventies, and, considering the career age customary in the ancient world, was probably not over fifty in A.D. 70; that is, he was born probably not earlier than A.D. 20. His brother Marcus was married in A.D. 43, and, again in view of the early marriage age of the period, was probably born also about A.D. 20. The presumption, then, must be that Alexander the Alabarch was a young man

whose children were being born in his early twenties, and so was himself born presumably not earlier than 10 B.C. If Philo was an old man ($\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\rho\omega\nu$) in A.D. 40 he would probably have been nearly sixty at the time, and his birth date, as has always been done, must be put close to 20 B.C.; that is, some years earlier than his brother's. In that case it is likely that Philo was less distinguished as a financier than Alexander because in his youth he was, as he says, interested exclusively in study and contemplation, and so left the responsibilities of the family estate to his younger brother. When he later emerged to share in active political affairs he still had his heart so largely in study and writing that Alexander continued financially the head of the family.

This is all we know of Philo from tradition or from autobiographical passages in his writings. We begin with him in the external life of the *politicus*, highly connected, wealthy, alive to all that was vital in Alexandria. To his political ideas we shall devote a separate chapter. Of Philo the man we can say only one thing more: he was also the man who found time to write a great number of treatises, which together must have been almost a library in themselves.

In these writings we gather much more about him. He lived in conflict between the practical and the contemplative life, but even within the contemplative life itself he was of divided loyalty. For his writings, which we shall consider more in detail in the next chapter, are for the most part scriptural commentaries: some of them consider the Biblical text verse by

verse, others devote whole treatises to discursive allegory on only a few verses, in the course of which scriptural statements from any part of the Pentateuch are selected and related to the central ones. In so far, his writings may be called Midrash. But the explanations and objectives reached are very unlike the Midrash of the rabbis. With a profound loyalty to the Bible which insists upon the sanctity of the very letter, with a loyalty to Jewish law which shows he must have been a carefully observant Jew, Philo shows a veritable obsession with the ideas of the Greek civilization about him. Not that he was at all indiscriminate in adopting ideas and practices of hellenistic Alexandria. The idolatry, the whole pagan cultus, he regarded with scorn. But no man educated like Philo in the sublime philosophy of the Greeks could fail to be moved by it. And philosophy included much: with Philo it included the whole system of Greek education, as well as the teachings of the formal philosophers of all schools, and those now less-known and more mystic ideas which Platonic and Pythagorean schools were developing in their transition to Neoplatonism. Of course not all philosophy was acceptable: Stoic materialism and Epicurean humanism were alike abhorrent to him. Yet the philosophical schools fascinated him apparently as much as, if not more than, the teachings of the Bible in their simple and literal form. And Philo was also deeply moved by the ideas behind the Mystery Religions which had poured into the hellenistic mixing bowl of Alexandria from all sides. To what extent he was influenced by them is

just at present a highly controverted point, but, if his mystical language and terms be discounted at the very lowest rate, and thought to be only terms which Philo "took from the air" without essential influence upon himself or his ideas, still there they are, staring at us from almost every page, and there can be no question that Philo's own religious experience was of a kind for which he found such a terminology expressive.

In this mingling of ideas which can be traced to a variety of sources lies the heart of the problem of Philo. How are we to conceive a man thus divided in his expression? Was he also divided in his loyalty, or was he primarily Greek or primarily Jewish? In the course of interpretation of Philo during the last century and a half this problem has not been so clearly envisaged as it has been during the last eight years, in the course of which three contributions have been made, Isaak Heinemann's *Philons griechische und jüdische Bildung*, 1932, my own *By Light, Light*, 1935, and Walther Völker's *Fortschritt und Vollendung bei Philo von Alexandrien*, 1938. None of these says the last word about Philo, but they are so different from each other that it will be well to consider each before discussing the problem of method and presuppositions which each of these books presents in a different way. For the elaborate discussion of methodology in Völker's work challenges all of us to point out clearly at the outset the major premises on the basis of which we shall proceed.

Heinemann is interested in the central question:

What is the exact nature of the mixture of pagan and Jewish elements in Philo; what did he take from which sources, and what was the meaning of the two when combined? The difficulties of this Heinemann frankly recognized at the start, chiefly that in many matters the Jews and gentiles were so close together that Philo might have had much of what he wrote from either source. Heinemann was convinced that the only method was to analyze closely a block of Philo's thinking with this point in mind. He chose the legal interpretations of Philo rather than the more metaphysical writings, and came to some interesting conclusions. Philo, he is certain, knew nothing of the Oral Tradition on which Talmudic law was ultimately based. He knew no Hebrew. He had simply the practices of the Jews of his community, and the Pentateuch; these he interpreted throughout in terms of Greek science, especially the scientific ethics of the Greek schools. He never ceased to be a Jew, and his Jewish piety—a term which Heinemann leaves rather vague— influenced his selection of Hellenic elements. But that influence, as he describes it, seems relatively slight in comparison with the influence of the Greek point of view upon his Judaism. The festivals and laws are spiritualized and justified, not in the Jewish way on the ground that they are commands of God and hence to be accepted as such, but because they are in accord with the general principles of ethics taught by the Greeks. God the legislator gave primarily the law of nature. Hence the blessed people with a special revelation, than which nothing can be

higher, become the people with a superior formulation of Greek metaphysics, and this is for Philo the basis of Jewish particularism. What Heinemann seems to be implying is that the superiority of Judaism was, to Philo, one of degree, not of kind, and the degree was in the possession of the miraculous Torah, by allegorizing whose words one might find the true sources and objectives of all Greek science and philosophy. That is, the Torah for Philo ceased to be Jewish in character, and became simply a cryptogram of Greek thought. True, Philo often treats Old Testament passages exactly as did the rabbis, and there was a movement of universalism and spiritualization in Judaism itself, especially in the prophets, which was very similar on many points to Greek thought. But Philo in all this was following the Greeks without suspecting his similarity on many details to rabbinic Judaism, as it later was codified, of which he seems to have been entirely ignorant.

Heinemann's work, a mine of information and a masterpiece of synthesis, has still to be critically judged. The only approach to that is to make a comparative study of his details. Here frankly I am beyond my depth. Has Heinemann adequately presented Jewish halacha, and are his conclusions sound? This is a question for halachic specialists to answer. Fortunately I know that they are working on it: particularly has the problem interested Dr. Samuel Belkin, whose recent most interesting study presents an entirely different picture of Philo's relation to Oral

Tradition.⁷ Much of Heinemann's structure is weakened if Belkin's point of view proves to be sound.

Still there can be no question that Heinemann has at least clearly defined a method of approach to Philo which cannot but be of profit as it is followed, even though it prove that Heinemann's own contribution is not final. To study the ideas of actual legislation, ceremonial and civil, in Philo is bound to lead to most important results. It is a method, however, which only halachists with a good training in classical law and philosophy can attempt.

In my own *By Light, Light* quite another block of Philonic material was made central. Here I was interested in studying what I called the "religiosity" of Philo, and took as my chief guide the more elaborately allegorical writings, in which I was convinced, and still am, that Philo wrote more from the heart than in any other of his works. That is, he wrote here from the point of view of his speculative and mystical aspirations, which he often ranked above all his other loyalties. These aspirations never for a moment displaced his active loyalty to the Jewish group, or the expression of that loyalty in careful legal observance. But over and again Philo asserts that the true meaning of that group in God's eyes, and of the literal tradition and observance of the Torah, can be perceived only by a minority of spiritually gifted men: ↗ it is a revelation that God is the source of a great stream of Being, as the sun is of light, and that the true Judaism is alone fulfilled when men not only

recognize this nature of deity, but ascend into ever higher participation in the Being of God thus radiated from the supreme and inaccessible One. In the process Philo assimilates the religious notions of paganism about him, particularly of the later forms of Pythagoreanism and Platonism. These taught the supreme and immaterial deity, but absorbed much of the emotion and form of the Mystery Religions when presenting the possibility of access to God, the mystic ascent. To the mystic ideas and aspirations of Philo a special chapter will be devoted. Here I may say that while I have developed the notion more elaborately than my predecessors, and have, I hope, shown its integration in the Jewish tradition more completely, I was but carrying on the tendency of the best Philonic scholarship of the last thirty years, Bousset, Bréhier, Windisch, Leisegang, Reitzenstein, Lewy, Pascher, and many others. We disagree sharply among ourselves about details, but agree that the basic departure of Philo from normative Judaism lies in the fact that he took to his heart the pagan idea of salvation; that is, that the spirit be released from the flesh in order to return to its spiritual source in God. This, rather than his adoption of the formal philosophy of classical Greek schools, important as that adoption was, seems to us the critical step of Philo.

But now a new book has appeared by Walther Völker which is so bitter an attack on this point of view that we can no longer assume our major premises in methodology. Völker, writing from the point of view of extremely conservative Protestantism, asserts

that to use the term mystic of Philo at all, as historians of religion have freely been doing, is to beg the essential question. He is convinced that, in his own words, “there exists no true mysticism apart from the ἐν Χριστῷ and the sacrament,” and that the attempt “to make Philo responsible for the beginnings of Christian mysticism” is motivated by the desire “to discredit Christian mysticism at its very outset by its pretended extra-Christian origin.” These are hard words which will convince no one not antecedently committed to Christian fundamentalism. The statement might well be ignored if it were not made by a man who then proceeds to give a deeply learned account of Philo in which the work of all historians of religion in the field is systematically attacked, and a new Philo image erected. The great weight of evidence, the assured knowledge of previous study of Philo, make the book extremely plausible, and I do not doubt that it will appeal to many.

Völker would set up a new methodology for studying Philo. First he denies *a priori* that the mystery ideas current in Philo’s world could have influenced a Jew, so he refuses to consider a line of the library of evidence from those sources which historians of religion have been accumulating. Secondly, he attacks over and again those who try to develop the thought of Philo by assembling passages on the different points of his doctrines, and then, when as usual the statements are contradictory, arbitrarily selecting some rather than others as the ones really typical of Philo’s thinking. The whole evidence, all the passages,

must be accounted for, he insists. Thirdly, he denies over and again that Philo had any system which can be elaborated in detail, on which I am sure we would all agree, but then says that Philo's varying statements must be considered from the point of view of his essential attitude which, he says, was that of a pious Jew. Anything which is not in harmony with this essential Philo was but a side issue, a *Nebenströmung*, or it was an attempt to drag in philosophical terminology which had no meaning for the religious heart of Philo's message. Actually, Völker's method is essentially the one he denounces. He collects the passages of Philo on each point he is discussing, and then asserts, on the basis of his own *a priori* position, that those passages which are in accord with the piety of the Psalms and Sirach are the true Philo. He then asserts that the philosophic passages are mere formal gestures, and that the mystical passages, if he adduces them at all, are meaningless phraseology. The Philo with whom he began and thus ends is a simple Jew who liked to talk in philosophical language to impress his education upon Greek readers.

It is hard to believe that anyone who has read much of Philo will agree with Völker. The great difficulty is that, for all Völker's protests against systematizing Philo, Völker's book is the most extreme example of simplification of Philo I have ever read, and I can see no essential difference between simplification and systematization. If Philo's religion was always and only that of the Son of Sirach, why is that religion so completely buried and lost in *Nebenströmungen*? The

Wisdom of Sirach is a book which in Greek would have been perfectly intelligible to Greeks, and to conceal such a message in the way Philo is said to have done would have been the most fatuous sort of procedure. It is impossible to believe that Philo was thus fatuous. That religious experience rather than rationalistic philosophy was Philo's objective is, I am sure, quite true. Völker's essential error is his consistent adherence to the *a priori* assumption that there can be no real religious spirit or motivation, certainly none that could appeal to a Jew, in pagan religiosity.

For myself I suggest that the methodology of studying Philo must be as follows.

The only proper way to begin is to read Philo, read all his works. To do this in the Greek and Armenian, considering the difficulty of the Greek and our general ignorance of Armenian, is a task which for most of us will be impossible. But now that Mr. Colson has so far advanced with the Loeb translation we may make a very good start in English, and, by frequent reference to the Greek, get some notion of Philo as a whole. Unfortunately the much less reliable Yonge will for a few years have to be used where Colson breaks off, as well as for the works preserved only in Armenian. To do any special study of Philo without such a beginning is extremely dangerous. To the character of Philo's different treatises we shall return in the next chapter. But with a grasp of Philo's prevailing interests, which only the general reading can give, we have some defense against an assertion, our own or another's, that this or that is the key to Philo,

or the heart of Philo. It is extremely important to begin in this way, also, since we should give Philo a hearing, as he himself preferred to present his ideas, before we interrupt to ask him questions which arise from our own thought forms. This is what I have elsewhere called reading Philo "with the grain," instead of against it, for all our questions will inevitably cut across his own presentation.

When we have heard Philo, patiently and at length, we may begin to ask him questions, scores of which will have come into our minds while he was speaking. To get his answers we shall have to continue to assemble passages on particular points. Everything that can be said against this method is valid, yet we must continue to use it, for there is no other. Philo gives us no single, exhaustive, and systematic discussion of any point, the doctrines of God, Logos, Spirit, Sophia, man, sin, salvation, the future life, ethics, social principles, the Law, and the rest. If we want to know about his ideas on any of these subjects, we must collect the scattered passages from all his writings where reference is made to them.

In evaluating these often flatly contradictory statements we come to the most difficult stage.

First we must be careful to observe the context of a given passage and the document from which it is taken. Some of Philo's writings, as we shall see, are political propaganda for circulation in the Roman governing class. Some are verse-by-verse commentary, with the literal meaning and simple moral conclusion carefully distinguished from the allegorical or mysti-

cal meaning. Some are diatribes in the classical form, some are sermons to simple Jewish people, apparently farmers. Some are subtle presentations of Jewish story and law for sympathetic gentiles; some are written, as he says, only for the initiates, with subjects discussed that must not be revealed to ordinary men. Indeed, Philo's writings are even more diverse than those of Montefiore, who likewise wrote now close studies of Judaism for Jews, and now interpretations of Judaism in various forms for Christians. Much of the confusion in Philonic interpretation has come from a failure to distinguish between these treatises as sources.

Secondly, we must study the passages closely for the ancestry of their language, whether that ascent lead us to philosophy, Judaism, mystery, or anywhere else. If we refuse to follow these lines without prejudice, it is apparent that we refuse to follow Philo himself. When our forefathers used phrases from Rousseau's *Social Contract* in the Declaration of Independence it is they themselves who compel us to read the *Social Contract* as part of the content of their minds, content which they tried to express in the Declaration. It is just as inaccurate to jump at once to the conclusion, because we find certain phrases from the *Social Contract* in the Declaration, that that document was built exclusively on Rousseau. The proper study will be not only of one source or type of sources. All eighteenth-century political philosophy will have to be considered, as well as the peculiar genius and experiences of colonial Americans. Still,

the fact remains that the presence of recognizable terms and phrases from a milieu outside a given document compels us to appraise that milieu and to study critically what the author of the document meant by using the terms, whether in repetition or modification of their former usage. So if Philo uses words which any intelligent reader of his day would have understood in terms of Platonism, Stoicism, Mystery Religion, or whatnot, it is clear that we cannot understand Philo in Völker's phrase, "out of himself," until we know the connotations of his vocabulary for himself and his readers. Only by a thorough acquaintance with the language and ideals of both Jews and Greeks in Philo's day will we be able to know what language he is using, and to what extent he changed its meaning for his purposes.

Such a thorough acquaintance we shall never have. The literature of Philo's day, gentile as well as Jewish, is largely lost. We have some of the classics they read, but not the current writings, only a jumble of fragments and names to tell us that the literature was very large. But of what we have we may exclude nothing *a priori* as a source of information. And much he may have had from the kaleidoscopic conversation of Alexandria, where traders came from all over the world and were eagerly pumped for their traditions. If we would understand Philo himself, we must first come as near as we can to understanding him as he expected a contemporary reader, of whatever audience, to understand him. The basic danger of any reconstruction of a figure from the past is isolation of

the person from his environment. Every "Life" must be a "Life and Times" if we are to have the "Life" itself; and this applies to the antecedents and environment of a thinker as much as to the *Sitz im Leben* of a man of affairs. We cannot isolate the unique in any individual until we have first recognized what was not unique in him at all. Philo, like Plato and Aristotle, must be read in his setting.

Only when we have come as near as we can to the impossible; that is, when we have read Philo's passages as nearly as we can in the way his contemporaries would have done, or as he meant his contemporaries to do, may we formulate answers to our questions about our particular points. We must still recall that Philo will answer in only one way, in terms of his own contemporary thought. We cannot make him talk our language, any more than we ourselves can talk the language of people two millennia from now. We know little enough of Philo's language: he can never know anything of ours. More and more we must project ourselves into his age, or there can be no contact between us at all. Gradually as we come to do so we may find a means of interpreting him to our contemporaries. But this interpretation cannot be a merely verbal one, since our words mean such different things from his.

Our interpretation must always be a paraphrase, behind which is a resolution of Philo into an entity common to him and to us, human nature. This, I must insist, again impossible though it is in the fullest sense, is our only approach to Philo. For unless

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human nature is constant, however different may be our conditioning in different ages, we can never understand any figure out of the past. Mere words are in themselves the most deceiving things. Language has value in any age only as a medium of transfer of ideas and emotions from one personality to others. Even so simple a word as the sun shows the difficulty. To us the sun is an inconceivably large ball of fire 93,000,000 miles away, the center of the solar system; practically and artistically it is a thing of beauty; emotionally a sunny day is associated with happiness and hope. But to the ancient world the sun was the source of life, human, animal, vegetable, and divine; it was the vivid symbol of God to philosophers, God itself in popular religion; it was the symbol of thought and perception, and, in Philo and the Mystery Religions alike, of revelation and mystic illumination. When Philo constantly appeals to the sun, then, it is to the sun of his day, not of ours, that he refers. His usage expresses quite different ideas and emotions from ours. The only way to understand what he expresses by the word is to find what it typified to him, and so to understand the word through our sympathy with his emotional objectives. That is, Philo the man must be understood before his language can fully speak to us. This implies a very circuitous approach to the problem, and is, as I have stated it, quite paradoxical. Philo's inner mind and life must determine the meaning of his language, but his language is our only approach to that inner mind and life. This is the essential difficulty of writing the

history of ideas, and it is on this rock that hopes of objectivity and finality must be wrecked. Our only recourse is a sort of shuttle: we study the words with all possible contemporary evidence until we get an insight into the man, then with that insight return to the words with new criteria for their meaning, and so on back and forth. It is a spiral which reaches Philo himself only at infinity. But it is the only method we have, and we do not help ourselves by refusing to recognize it. The test before which any final picture of Philo must stand or fall is a double one: is it in accord with Philo's own statements understood in the language of his day, and does it make a convincing human picture out of those conflicting statements? For behind Philo's statements stood a human being, one who will appeal to a reader increasingly because his personality lives on in his works. To understand him we must, let me repeat, largely let him speak to us, often about matters in which we have no interest, until in our picture it is the interests and motives of Philo, as little as possible those of our own, which we present.

Such an understanding we shall never even approximate if we do not watch our preconceptions carefully. His Jewish loyalty we must not prejudge by ours if we are Jews. To begin: "Philo was a loyal Jew, and therefore . . .," is fatal, because even in our own generation there is no single way to complete the sentence, while for Philo's own generation and environment we have only Philo himself to complete it. Philo's Jewish loyalty made him carefully obey the

law and spurn the rites of the Mystery Religions and of paganism: did it make him spurn the ideology behind those rites? Did Judaism at that time mean Hasidic separation from the *ideas* of the gentile world, or only from its worship? Such questions we cannot prejudge. Again, did Philonism die with Philo, or did it leave a deep impression, not on the Judaism we usually associate with the terms rabbinic and normative, but on the mystic Judaism which finds itself repeatedly echoed and even cited in Talmud and Midrash, and which seems finally to have burst into Caballa? To these questions we cannot begin with an answer. In spite of ourselves we shall have a predilection toward an answer, but unless we can become like the chemists who freely give over their predilections where they do not prove verifiable in experiment, we are not scholars but propagandists, however profound our learning.

If we are Christians we cannot begin with an *a priori* answer to the question of the relation of the religious experiences of Philo and his friends to Christianity. However unique we may feel the Christian revelation to be, we are not scholars when we defend that uniqueness by insisting that nothing else could resemble it in any particular. It is quite true that nothing good can come from scholars who try to break down the uniqueness of Christianity by stressing only the similarities of Christianity with other religions and refusing to discuss the differences. But it is just as true that stressing only the differences is bound to lead to as great futility. No Jew would deny

that there was something unique in Christianity which enabled it to push aside all the other religions and become the dominant faith in Western civilization. From the point of view of Philo, it seems to me, we must do exactly what Völker recommends: we must forget Christianity as far as we can and find what is in Philo himself. Certainly we shall find much mysticism, as that word is used in all languages. To limit mysticism to the experience "in Christ" is simply to rob us of the term by which we have long expressed a certain type of religious experience found all over the world.

And here, parenthetically, since mysticism is a word which we shall use freely, a definition of the term is required. In contrast, a religion which is not mystical is one whose basic motive is reverence, respect, a sense of loyalty or obligation, even of profound love, for a divine Being who is thought of in terms quite objective. When divinity is put up in heaven, or on Olympus, and our feeling toward him is one of a child who bows in love and respect before a father, inspired by his majesty and eager to obey his commands, our religion is not mystical. But when, driven by an inner sense of lack, insufficiency, we cry out for a divinity or higher reality who or which will come into us, take away our dross, unite ourselves to himself or itself, then we are mystics. The experience is one of classical ecstasy only occasionally for anyone, and never for most. Often it is a very quiet sense of union, with few high points of emotion. Or it may be the familiar alternation of moods of dryness and inspiration, neither

of which goes into the extremes of despair or ecstasy. Yet when we say—"I can live for Buddha is within me," or "for Christ is within me," or "for the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is within me," the experience is mystical, since in all these statements the experience is described that one can do or be the superhuman since the superhuman has become in some measure a part of oneself. Naturally the experience takes on a different color as the character of the God differs with whom one is united. The ethical consequences of the experience will vary enormously. But there is a distinct common denominator in all of them, since all infuse the human with the divine, and make participation the real meaning of imitation. It is in this sense that I shall use the term mystical, and my reading of Philo forces me, like the vast majority of Philonic scholars, to call Philo a mystic.

Preconceptions, then, are in the long run the danger point in trying to understand Philo. Here Völker has set us a model which we may well follow. He has written in his Preface the preconceptions with which he begins. The appraisal of his work has thereby been made much easier. Anyone who studies Philo will do well to watch himself for the preconceptions, not only at the outset, but for the hasty judgments he will be making throughout his study, and which may unconsciously influence his decisions. My own preconceptions I shall set forth in the same spirit of frankness. Many of them have already appeared.

First I see in Philo a man divided in his loyalty not only between the Jewish and hellenistic ways of liv-

ing, but also between their religious motivations. I cannot emphasize one at the expense of the other. Philo tried to combine the two, but whether the result is to be called hellenized Judaism or judaized Hellenism is quite indifferent, since neither conquered the other. Secondly, I must read Philo, as far as possible, in his own language and thought forms. Interpretation for moderns cannot be direct, but only in terms of the personality behind the language and thought, and the experiences into which he came. That is, we must see Philo the man in the human experiences he expressed in his own terms, and must interpret his thought forms to moderns through a reconstruction ~~of~~ + of the man. I believe that only so can we ever understand the men or thought of antiquity. Thirdly, this reading of Philo in his own thought categories implies the widest comparison of his language with every kind of contemporary or near-contemporary usage, though large conclusions from parallels are extremely dangerous. In the Preface I have stated that parallels are by nature lines which never meet, so that it is more than mere parallels we must establish if similarity is to have any importance. Fourthly, I have for twenty years been convinced that hellenistic Christianity was inexplicable apart from the preparation within Judaism which Philo shows existed. What Christianity took from this Judaism, and what it added to it to make the new religion, I am still trying to keep open in my mind. It is a subject toward which much of my work has all along been pointing, but I am not ready for it yet. Fifthly, I am con-

vinced that Philo's position in Judaism was not unique. His own constant references to predecessors and contemporaries whose Judaism was like his own make uniqueness in my mind impossible. He himself seems a man with a long tradition behind him. Nor can I believe that the movement died out with him, or was smothered by Christianity. What his ideas contributed to the history of later Judaism is a subject we cannot discuss here. But I think I can honestly say that, while on this subject I have hypotheses which I propose some day to argue, I have no conclusions which are final even in my own mind. As to Philo's knowledge of the Oral Tradition as it existed in his own day I am still waiting to be informed by rabbinites.

But granted that a student thus state his preconceptions and try to master them, will he then produce a picture of Philo which all will agree is definitive? Certainly not. On this subject one word more should be said, for I cannot understand the emotional intolerance which so often passes for scholarship. Some books are outside the realm of scholarship, hastily written by charlatans or by fond amateurs with no command of the material. These we may ignore, or even sharply rebuke. But there is no reason to ignore the product of any serious scholar, however much we may disagree with him. For there is one source of disagreement which no stating of preconceptions can obviate, our emotional variety as men. As I project myself back to Philo's age, it must always and only be myself that I project. It is this which makes it for-

ever impossible that anyone write an objective study of Philo.

The writing of history in general has for the past years been increasingly under fire. More and more have philosophers been insisting that we can write only chronology; that is, that we can identify events as facts in a frame of time, but that all attempts to reconstruct connection between events, such matters as cause and effect, or, in man, motivation, can be done only by the projection of our own personalities into the past, so that we select and arrange historical data in an order which is ultimately a creation of our own. In political and institutional history this notion, while never wrong, seems to me often misleading, for it tends to discredit what really tries to be objective history, history which the author himself is delighted to have scrutinized and verified by other scholars; at the same time the complete denial of objective history encourages really subjective historians to go into uncontrolled schematizations which other scholars cannot relate to data at all. For the history of ideas, however, the warning is, as we have seen, much more important. Here we are bound to be largely subjective, and agreement is really hopeless. It is impossible that a person of mystic and religious temper come out from a reading of Plato's *Dialogues*, for example, with the same idea of what is basic and primary as would a man to whom mysticism means vagary, and to whom rationalistic analysis is the only interest. Men with Protestant, Jewish, and Catholic backgrounds cannot read Thomas Aquinas, Martin Lu-

ther, and Maimonides and each see at all what the others see. Controversies about the meaning of documents of the first Christian centuries will never be settled. Not only do different groups see different things in them during a single generation, but as a new generation with a new philosophy and new emotional pattern arises it will see always a new picture in the same documents.

Does this mean that scholarly research in such fields is futile? I cannot and will not believe so. There is always the hope that by recognizing our own limitations we may gradually come to approximations of truth. At least without this hope we must give up all attempt to learn or explain the ideas of any but ourselves. For the logic of philosophic objectors to history leads us, like so much other philosophic logic, to solipsism.

In spite of the logical inevitability of solipsism, we cannot live by it. We must assume the reality of the world outside us, and our power in some sense to understand it. This applies to history, even to the history of ideas, as well as to all other aspects of our environment. We shall never agree about Plato, Jesus, Philo, Luther, or any other figure. My own emotional life as well as my preconceived ideas will make me stress what seems quite unessential in their characters to others. To some, mysticism just doesn't make sense. To me no religion is more than intellectually comprehensible which does not include the mystic longing for inner completion by participation. This is bound to affect my understanding of Philo. Un-

questionably I shall respond as many others would not to the passages where he expresses a mystic longing. This sort of disagreement we must expect; and I can see no reason why cheeks should flush when we talk of interpretations of Philo from which we wholly or partially dissent. In this field as in all fields the goal of scholarship should be not knowledge but wisdom, a wisdom which expresses itself finally in understanding each other.

NOTES—CHAPTER I

1. For documentation of these statements, see my *The Politics of Philo Judæus, Practice and Theory* (New Haven, 1938), 64–66, whence this text is largely excerpted. This work is hereafter referred to as *Philo's Politics*. For an excellent study of Tiberius and his father, see A. Lepape, "Tiberius Julius Alexander," *Bulletin de la Société Royale d'Archéologie d'Alexandrie*, VIII (1934), 331–341.

2. *Spec.*, iii, 1–6.

3. *LA*, ii, 85.

4. *Fug.*, 49.

5. For documentation of the foregoing, see my *The Jurisprudence of the Jewish Courts in Egypt* (New Haven, 1929), 2 f., whence this text is excerpted.

6. Fragment from Antonius, *Ser.*, cxxiii; Mangey, II, 673.

7. Samuel Belkin, *Philo and the Oral Law: the Philonic Interpretation of Biblical Law in Relation to the Palestinian Halakah* (Cambridge, Mass., 1940. *Harvard Semitic Series*, XI). See my review in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, September, 1940. Belkin's thesis is that Philo knew Hebrew, was well informed about rabbinic traditions, and based his interpretation of law largely upon rabbinic principles.

CHAPTER II

PHILO'S WRITINGS

IT has been suggested that the first task of a beginner is to read Philo through. Here I shall attempt to give some suggestions for that reading, since his treatises are not easy to approach. A reader of Philo must distinguish carefully between the different sorts of writings, for each should be read with different expectations. So, at the expense of making a dull analysis, I must outline the various series of treatises in the corpus, and the place of the individual documents in each series. This has often been done before. The analyses by Schürer,¹ Massebieau,² Cohn,³ and Schmid⁴ follow each other closely, and to them I must refer a student for many details. The presentation has become quite standardized, for that of Schmid in 1920 is almost exactly that of Cohn in 1899, and he differed only in details from his predecessors. This conception of Philo's writings is still valid for the most part, though I shall frequently find occasion to differ from it. But I should like to consider Philo's works in the order in which it is recommended for a beginner to read them, rather than in the order in which they are usually discussed.

The first treatises of Philo which one should read seem to me to be the two, in the first of which he defends the Jews of Alexandria for their relations with Flaccus, and in the second for their refusing, even to

Gaius' face, to accept the emperor's divinity. These two treatises bear the titles *Against Flaccus* and *The Embassy to Gaius*. Not only are they Philo's most vividly written treatises, but in them Philo speaks more in the first person than in any others, and the reader of Philo's other works should always have in mind that they were written by a man who could write these. They are not his earliest writings, for he says he was an old man when he went on the embassy, and these must have been written after the events they describe. Both of these works are fragmentary, and there has been considerable dispute, which need not here be reviewed, about their original form.⁵ Their content will be so much the concern of the next chapter that further comment will not be made at this time. But of their purpose I may repeat what is published elsewhere,⁶ that the two seem extraordinarily clever political tracts designed to prove to Roman administrators that they harass Jews at their peril. The Jews are the best citizens in the empire, dutiful and profitable to an amazing degree, but to interfere with them brings disaster upon their persecutors. Especially are the Jews divinely protected in their legal observances, and to compel them to disregard the Sabbath, or to recognize imperial divinity, for example, is fatal for those so mad as to attempt such compulsion. I have suggested that the treatise *Against Flaccus* was written for Flaccus' successor, or one of his successors, and *The Embassy to Gaius* for Claudius and his court (perhaps for Nero).

Following the biographical line, the student would

✓ do well next to read *On the Contemplative Life*. Here is a document which is obviously a part of a larger work. Its first sentence reveals that such was the case, and the suggestion has now been accepted for many years that it was part of an *Apology for the Jews* addressed to gentiles, other fragments of which go under the name *Hypothetica*. *On the Contemplative Life*, a unit complete in itself, describes the life of the Therapeutæ, a peculiar group of Jewish monks, male and female, who lived in seclusion in the desert. It is assumed with great probability that Philo's early monkish isolation which, in the passage quoted in the preceding chapter, Philo says he was forced to abandon for political service, was none other than an early membership in or residence with this group. Certainly he describes the monastics with admiring passion. Again it is well to have in mind very early that Philo not only was the man of political action, but also one who never ceased to respect, and at least in part to envy, the possibilities of such contemplative isolation. The literature on this document is very large,⁷ for in the mid-nineteenth century a great controversy raged as to whether it was genuine, or the Therapeutæ were not really a group of Christian monks of three centuries later. That controversy has now long been settled, and no one for years has questioned the Philonic validity of the work.

The two fragments of the *Hypothetica* which survive in Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica* (VIII, 5-7),⁸ seem to represent another section from the rest of the longer work of which *On the Contempla-*

tive *Life* itself was originally a part. This work as a whole seems to have been an *Apology for the Jews*, by which title it is often referred to. Here Philo seems to be addressing himself to the same sort of hostile critic as that Apion whom Josephus answered, and we may assume that Philo's *Apology* and Josephus' work *Against Apion* were not dissimilar in tone and material. In the first fragment Philo refutes slanderous assertions that Moses was a soothsayer, and in the second gives a few of the weightier points of the Jewish law. With the loss of this document the details of one whole aspect of Philo's attitude toward paganism have disappeared. At least the student should early learn that this sort of attitude did express itself. A third fragment, cited by Eusebius as from the *Apology* (*Praep. Ev.*, VIII, 10, 18) not the *Hypothetica*, probably belongs to the same work. It tells of the Essenes in much the way *On the Contemplative Life* tells of the Therapeutæ, and both were probably in a section of the lost work which, while refuting slanders, presented to gentiles the heights of Jewish mystic achievement as expressed in the lives of such sects or orders.

The student should next read Philo's two books *On the Life of Moses*. This work has passed through several stages of critical appraisal, especially for its relation to one of Philo's larger series, *The Exposition of the Law*.⁹ Here it need only be said that in itself *On the Life of Moses* has always been taken as another apology for the Jews, this one addressed to friendly rather than hostile pagans, who would like to

know who the great Moses was of whom Jews were so proud, and what he did. Apology has now become an introduction to Judaism through the story of Moses and the establishment of Jewish law. We are coming nearer to Philo's message with each successive document, and it is interesting to watch carefully what sort of Judaism it is which Philo presents to sympathetic gentiles. Moses is characterized basically in terms of the contemporary ideal of the king, who was to be a "divine man" and so link the people with the spiritual order. This was a personality of whom the pagan world had long been dreaming. He would be the ideal Sage of the Stoics, the "divine man" of the Pythagoreans, the "savior" of the Mysteries, and his life would be of value not only for himself but as a powerful ordering and saving agent in society and in the lives of individuals who looked to him for guidance. It was indeed wishful thinking when subjects had claimed that the ideal was realized in a contemporary Egyptian Pharaoh, in a Persian or Babylonian ruler, or even, in their own day, in the Jewish David and Solomon. But the dream was age-old, expressed in the widest variety of mythical terminology, and was still thrusting itself, in spite of all the democratic tradition of Rome, upon the new rulers of the world. Yet however often men might describe their actual rulers in such terms, no one was so fooled thereby that the ideal was not, for full realization, projected back upon mythical heroes of old, upon Socrates, Lycurgus, or Minos, or forward upon the

coming Messiah of the Jews or, possibly, of Vergil's fourth *Eclogue*.

This extremely complex idea was expressed legally by describing the ideal man as νόμος ἐμψυχος, *lex animata*, the incarnate representation of supreme and universal Law. In him that Law, itself unformulated, could become vocal, λογικός; that is, the ideal man had the power of taking a Law which was spirit and divine purpose, and of applying it to human problems. Through him the Law, or nature, of God, could become statutory laws, and true laws for society could never, it was universally believed, be had in any other way.¹⁰

It was Philo's triumphant boast that what the gentiles sought in ignorance the Jews had actually possessed in Moses. As a corollary to this kingship with its divine power of legislation, Moses was also the ideal priest and prophet, and he was able to give the perfect legislation of Judaism. At the end Philo says that this man of God was exalted, freed from death, and translated to take his place among the stars where he joined in the cosmic hymn of the heavenly bodies and then, after final admonitions to Israel, shed his body, in the Platonic phrase (*Phœdr.* 250c) like the shell of an oyster, as his soul returned to the immaterial. The gentiles who read this book would have been led, if persuaded by Philo, to see in Judaism the realization of all their own dreams. Here was the perfect king and savior, the ideal legislator, and hence the hope of mankind. But the gentiles

would have heard very little about a Jewish point of view of God, nature, or man which was in any sense different from what the noblest teachers of Greece had long been presenting.

If *The Life of Moses* succeeded in its purpose, it would have awakened in the gentile a lively desire to learn more of the Jewish traditions. What was the history of this people, and what the amazing legislation which such a Moses had given? In one passage of *The Life of Moses* Philo suggests that he will analyze the historical part of the books of Moses, and then the legislation. This promise I have elsewhere shown was fulfilled in his first great series of writings, at least the first series I would recommend to be read, *The Exposition of the Law*.

Here, with much greater elaboration than before, Philo can lead the gentile into his Judaism. I must warn you that while I was not the first to suggest that the *Exposition* was designed for gentiles, I was the first to do so after scholars had for forty years considered it proved to the contrary, and when even Schürer had been brought over to that opinion. But, unlike many of my publications, this one has been received with almost unanimous approval, so far as I have seen, and I think the reader may here follow me safely. The arguments need not be repeated.¹¹

The reader of the *Exposition*, it is definitely assumed by Philo, will have first read *The Life of Moses*. Now Philo treats the Torah, which to him was the Pentateuch, under several divisions. These may be entitled: the cosmological introduction; the incar-

nations of Law; the general principles of Law; the applications of these principles in specific laws; the relation of these to the cardinal virtues of the Greeks; and the sanctions of the laws in reward and punishment.

The first of these, the cosmological introduction, is presented in what I consider Philo's most difficult treatise, entitled *On the Creation of the World*. It is the treatise printed first in all editions of Philo, and its difficulty has only too often made it the last as well as the first for a reader to attempt. It should be read as a brilliant *tour de force*, by which Philo wishes to amaze the gentile reader with the great amount of hellenistic cosmology and metaphysics which he can read out of, really into, the first three chapters of Genesis. Yet it is not wholly an artificial work. Philo here is carefully selecting those aspects of philosophy which had appealed to him in Greek writings, or in Iranian tradition, and which he had taken into his own religious thinking. The very fact that Moses has begun with the creation of the world shows, says Philo, that he surpassed all the other lawmakers. For, while some have begun at once with legislation, others with myths, Moses presents at the outset the place of Law in the universe, and the fact that one who obeys true Law is thereby living in accord with nature and nature's God. The ultimate is twofold (§8), active Cause and passive object. The active Cause, God, transcends all things, even virtue, the beautiful, and the good. But this transcendent Being is at the same time the cause of all created things. The equally

original passive object is unformed matter. The fact that the formed world must have had an origin is argued after the reasoning of Plato in the *Timæus*. The two Biblical stories of creation are then discussed in detail. The creation in seven days described in the first chapter of Genesis is to Philo the creation of the ideal world (§16), the Platonic pattern of the material world. The first creation, being immaterial, is also nonspatial, and existed in the divine reason or Logos as an architect's plan takes its first and most important formation in the architect's mind (17–22). But in applying this perfect creation to matter, God was from the first limited by the limitations of matter itself, the ultimate passive object. The perfect creation was itself the Logos of God (24 f.), and the days of creation could not represent time, for time, as Plato had said, came into existence only with the movement of the heavenly bodies in space. The number of "days" of the first ideal creation then represents the order of, or within, the ideal world, which actually came into existence in all its parts simultaneously. Much attention is given to the numeralogical force of each of the numbers from one to seven, and the appropriateness of what was done on each day, or what is to be classified under each number. When Philo comes to man, being "in the image of God" is identified with man's divine reasoning power, by which man truly resembles God and aspires to mystic association with God (69–71). But, after the manner of the *Timæus*, man was made not by God alone, but also by assistants, as indicated by the phrase "let us

make": in this way, again following Plato, God is saved from causation of evil.

The second part of the treatise takes up the second story of creation, and the fall. The first man was, after all, a purely ideal creature. The man created in the second story was a combination of matter and spirit, made from mother earth, and, unlike his ideal prototype, specifically male. He was made of the very best materials and given, in the breath of God, the Logos as his spiritual nature. As such he was a citizen of the universe, co-citizen with the heavenly bodies, and, since the Logos was the summation of the ideal world, so man was in his spiritual nature a microcosmos, and even his body was made after the ideal numerical relations. He was the one true king of all time. His downfall began with the creation of woman, who represented and emphasized the material part of his nature, especially physical desire.) Through her the serpent, symbol of pleasure, attacked him and caused his downfall, for reason became the slave of pleasure, and with this enslavement mother earth ceased to produce for man without his toil and effort.

The book closes with what is, so far as I know, the first creed of history. First, against the atheists, both those in doubt about God's ruling (the Epicureans) and those who denied his existence altogether, Philo affirms that God exists and rules the world. Secondly, against polytheists he affirms that God is One. Thirdly, against various schools, he affirms that the material world had a beginning in its present form;

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fourthly, against atomists of all periods, that there is but one cosmos, which exhausts all matter; fifthly, against the Epicureans, that God exercises providence in the world, a providence which is not the Stoic determinism, but what seems to be an immanent presence and coöperation of divinity in the created world, and especially, like a father with his children, in man.¹²

He that has begun by learning these things with his understanding rather than with his hearing [Philo concludes] and has stamped on his soul these marvelous and priceless realities ($\varepsilon\imath\delta\eta$), namely that God both is and is from eternity, that he who truly is is one, that he has created the world and created it a single entity after the likeness of his own unity, and that he ever exercises forethought for his creation, such a man will lead a blessed and happy life, for he is moulded by dogmas which produce piety and holiness.

Every bit of this creed, which the gentile must accept if he is to go on with Philo, is familiar Platonic and Pythagorean doctrine. Monotheism in the sense that the ultimate principle and true God is One was a familiar and accepted notion in most philosophic systems of the Greeks. The only thing in this creed which seems Jewish in origin is the almost parenthetic explanation that the providence of God was like that of a father for his children. God the father in pagan tradition was, like God the father in the Apostles' Creed, "the Almighty creator of heaven and earth." He was the Begetter, first Cause, not the kindly guide and protector of his offspring. To introduce the new

conception of divine fatherhood was a most important change, and in the course of reading Philo it will become apparent that this is one of the essential survivals of Judaism in its mingling with pagan ideas. But it must not be made to overshadow all the rest of Philo's creed, which, as a whole, is one which no intelligent pagan would have had any trouble in deriving from his own postulates. The purpose of the treatise *On Creation*, then, is to show that in Moses' story of creation is set forth the best pagan cosmology and metaphysic, that of the unique creator God who expresses himself by means of the Logos, and to center the gentile's mind on this conception of God while before his wondering eyes the concept is worked out from the simple Biblical narratives.

The *Exposition of the Law* for gentiles is now ready to go on to the next stage in which Law exists. The first was Law in the mind of God, the ideal world, and the material cosmos, Law as the purpose inherent in the nature of God. The revelation of Law, most perfect in the metaphysical realm, takes its second form in the person of the ideal human being, the man who conquered his material nature (as poor Adam proved unable ultimately to do) and so whose life is a revelation of true Law in the human microcosm. This ideal has already appeared in the description of Moses, but is here brought forward again for the early Patriarchs of Jewish history.

Philo begins the treatise *On Abraham*, which in the *Exposition* followed that *On the Creation of the World*, with the words:

As well as we could we have analyzed in our former treatise how the creation of the world was disposed. But since it is now necessary in due order to investigate the laws, we shall postpone the consideration of the detailed laws, which are in a sense copies, in order to investigate those more general laws which one might call their antecedent archetypes. These latter laws are those men who have lived irreproachably and nobly, whose virtues have been promulgated in the sacred scriptures, not merely to praise them, but in order to exhort those who read them, and to lead readers to the like aspiration. For these men were incarnate and vocal laws (*νόμοι ἔμψυχοι καὶ λογικοί*), whom Moses has celebrated for two reasons: because he wished first to show that the laws of the Code are not at variance with nature, and second that those who wish to live according to the established laws (of the Torah) are not confronted with a tremendous labor, in as much as these original men readily and easily used the legislation even in its unwritten form, before a beginning had been made in writing down any of the particular laws. So one could properly say that the laws of the Code are nothing but memoirs of the life of the ancients, discussions of antiquities, namely the deeds and words of their active careers. For they were not pupils or disciples of anyone, nor did they learn what to do or say from teachers, but they were people who heard for themselves (*αὐτήκοοι*) and taught themselves (*αὐτομαθεῖς*), clove to what was in accordance with nature, and on the supposition, as is indeed the fact, that nature herself is the primary Law, they shot their whole lives through with the fine order of Law (*ἀπαντά τὸν βίον ηύνομηθησαν*). They did nothing reprehensible of their own volition, while for chance offences they loudly

implored God and propitiated him with prayers and supplications in order that they might share in a perfect life purged of both deliberate and involuntary offences.

These Patriarchs are presented in two triads, Enos, Enoch, and Noah, who are considered briefly at the beginning of *On Abraham*, and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to each of whom Philo devoted a treatise. The treatises on Isaac and Jacob are lost. In the treatise *On Abraham* that Patriarch's story is traced: his migration from material bondage, his successive visions, his marriage with Wisdom or Virtue in Sarah, all these are developed until it appears that Abraham has become more than a man. God spoke to him "no longer as though he were speaking to a human being, but as a friend with a friend" (*Abr.*, 273), and Abraham, by virtue of being the unwritten law of God, was a merciful benefaction ($\chiάρις$) from God with abiding power to benefit man.

Of the treatises on Isaac and Jacob we have only summaries in the concluding book of the *Exposition*. From there we learn that these characters were similarly treated, but that Isaac was even more exalted than Abraham and Jacob. For, while these had had to go through long periods of migration and training before they achieved the ideal relationship with God, Isaac was a divine being from his birth who had no occasion or room for improvement.

The story of Joseph is an interruption in the logical sequence of Philo's thought, but the book *On*

Joseph should next be read since it followed in the *Exposition*, and is extremely important for Philo's general thinking. I have elsewhere treated that book at length,¹³ and will here say only that in telling the story of Joseph, Philo takes advantage of the opportunity to discuss the function of the civil ruler and to give his gentile readers some sharp advice on the proper conduct of Egyptian affairs. Joseph, a man actively engaged in political matters, a *politicus*, is by no means idealized as were the three who preceded him. But Joseph was an exemplary ruler in that he looked always to God's guidance, and carefully observed justice to men of all nationalities. If the Romans are looking for an ideal prefect of Egypt, they will do well, Philo is saying, to note that the ideal was fully exemplified of old in none other than a Jew.

After this invasion of the main argument by Philo's political interest, Philo is ready to resume his thread of exposition. He has shown Law in its metaphysical and cosmic reality, and then in men who, the prototypes of Jewish piety, were the incarnations of that higher Law and so the saviors of men thereafter. The gentile enquirer is now ready for formulated or verbal law. This too, as Philo tells us in the treatise *On the Decalogue*, the Jews have uniquely in its highest form; that is, in a formulation made not by man at all, but directly by God. The perfection of the number of the Ten Commandments is of course amplified, and the miraculous voice which was not a sound in the sense we know it, but an immediate imparting of the message to the minds of all the Jewish nation assem-

bled at Sinai. The commands are divided into two groups of five each, the one setting forth the basic principles of men's relation to God, the other of their relation to each other. Each of the ten is expounded as a basic principle of law, from which all lesser statutes are derived.

On the Decalogue has thus sketched the line which the later amplification is to take. The next four books, those entitled *On the Special Laws*, are a systematic review of Mosaic legislation to show how the individual statutes of that legislation are all logical and proper results of the application of these principles to various aspects of life. To many Jews these books *On the Special Laws* will be the most interesting in Philo, for here he is more concerned with Jewish law than in any other treatise. But to gentiles these books are quite slow reading. In the first book Philo first defends, rather fancifully, the Jewish rite of circumcision. It is interesting that here appears for the first time so far as I know the myth that circumcision was originally given to the Jews, or practised by them, for hygienic reasons. Philo then takes up the first two Commandments of the Decalogue as general principles of legislation on temple worship, regulations of the priesthood, tithes, the animals sacrificed, and the attitude of the worshiper. The legislation is not completely reviewed, but by far the most of it is discussed. Yet the discussion is very different from what a normative Jew would have given. Each law is justified on the basis of its general symbolic value in representing to the faithful the type of



virtue Philo and his pagan reader together have throughout assumed to be the norm. The exclusion of the hire of the harlot, for example, is more elaborately allegorized than other laws, but is quite of a piece with the other explanations. The harlots are those who reject the Platonic Forms or Ideas, atheists, polytheists, rationalists, and those who honor the senses rather than God.¹⁴ Philo is plainly saying that only those who have the correct Platonic philosophy of life can truly share in the ritual of the Jewish temple. He is obviously still writing for pagan enquirers.

The second book of the *Special Laws* discusses the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Commandments. Prohibition of the use of the Name becomes a prohibition of taking oaths, and all manner of oaths are considered for their propriety, as well as the evils and penalties of perjury. Legislation of votive offerings is also here discussed. The Fourth Commandment is made the generic law of all Jewish festivals, and here the festivals are strongly schematized into sacraments of mystic import. This section is one of the most important in Philo for the adapting of Jewish rites to mystic ideas.¹⁵ After discussing briefly the Fifth Commandment, in which obedience to parents is justified again on Greek grounds, Philo closes by showing that the correct penalty for infractions of all the first five Commandments and their subsidiary laws is death.

Up to this point Philo has brought in considerable civil law, that of inheritance, oaths, and perjury, and interest on loans. But it is with the third book, where the second half of the Decalogue is considered, that

civil and criminal law is more systematically discussed, and it is in introducing this section that Philo gives the important description of his own life which we considered in the first chapter, how he was early dedicated to mystic contemplation, but was torn away to be plunged into political cares. He then goes on at once to the Sixth Commandment, where the same method is used as in the first two books. Under the Sixth Commandment Philo subsumes all legislation of marriage and sex: incest and the forbidden marriages of different kinship; divorce and regulation of intercourse within marriage (on which point Philo is much more ascetic than rabbinic tradition); sexual perversions and adultery. The rest of the book discusses laws which fall under the general command against killing and here he classifies not only the laws covering different types of homicide, but the beating of slaves to death, laws which set the penalties for violence by a bull, and for accidents which result from an unguarded pit or roof, as well as all the laws dealing with various types of assault.

In the fourth book of the *Special Laws* the other Commandments are discussed. Under the prohibition of stealing Philo discusses not only the different sorts of robbery and theft, but also kidnaping, property damage, deposits, and loans. Under the command against false witness he discusses the whole problem of evidence in courts, as well as divination, the qualities of a judge, and his criteria in passing upon evidence. Under the words, "Thou shalt not covet," Philo finally brings in the dietary laws, whose justifi-

cation he makes ethical principle rather than law in the sense in which he has hitherto been using the term.

In the last few years these books *On the Special Laws* have been discussed with an interest never before shown. In my *Jewish Jurisprudence*¹⁶ I pointed out the great number of parallels to Greek and Roman procedure, and concluded that Philo was giving a picture of Jewish law as practised in the Jewish courts of Egypt. Heinemann published his great work¹⁷ in which he sharply disagreed with me. Of his book and the recent study of Belkin¹⁸ I have already spoken. The beginner might stop at this point and read these three books, but I should advise against it. He must know more sides of Philo than he has yet met in order to be able to read them critically. The immediate task is to go on and finish the *Exposition*.

The next treatise in the *Exposition* is that *On Virtues*. Here the point of view is no longer that of law, but frankly of ethics. The treatise, which may have originally included a section on piety, is now divided under the heads of bravery, love of mankind ($\phi\lambda\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\alpha$), repentance, and nobility. Whereas before he was demonstrating the legal soundness of Jewish legislation, the general purpose now is to show that the Jewish laws are also in harmony with the best traditions of Greek ethics. Heinemann has pointed out¹⁹ that the great stress on Jewish love of man is of apologetic character against the gentile accusation that Jews were taught to hate all but their own people; he has made it clear that while Philo develops this virtue in the main on lines familiar in hellenistic

ethics he infuses into it the Jewish religious note that true love of God will fructify in love of man. The two last virtues, repentance and nobility, are really a pretext for discussing the problem of proselytes, to which issue Philo has at last brought his gentile reader. The gentile in becoming a proselyte will abandon polytheism, recognize and worship the one God, and conduct his life according to the best virtues. As such, Philo points out in the section on nobility, the proselyte will be quite the equal of native Jews, and indeed superior to those who are Jews only by birth and not also by virtue and observance. For true nobility is not a matter of Jewish birth as Cain, Ham, Adam, Esau, and the sons of Abraham other than Isaac show, but is of the heart, as appeared in the case of Abraham, Thamar, and others. For, by the Law, every man is judged not on the merits of his fathers, but on his own.

The last treatise of the *Exposition* is *On Rewards and Punishments*. It is really a review or summary of the points Philo has had throughout in mind. Again the Patriarchs emerge as types of true accomplishment of Judaism. To the ones already discussed, Enos, Enoch, and Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is now added the great seventh, Moses, whose career had been discussed in the preliminary work *On the Life of Moses*. The reward these men achieved was not that of happiness in a future life, for of this Philo has little to say, but was mystic completion. Cain and Korah, the examples of punishment, on the contrary were cursed by banishment from God, with

its attendant penalties of fear and sorrow. This section breaks off suddenly, and the conclusion of the *Exposition* is lost. There can be no doubt, however, what this conclusion was. It must have been a final exhortation to the gentile reader to achieve the blessings of mystic Judaism.²⁰

The reader who has followed Philo to this point has had a very good introduction to the man, and stands on the threshold of his deeper thought. From the active politician we have gradually come, through his defenses against hostile attacks, to his writings in which Judaism is presented to gentiles in the hope of winning not only their tolerance but their conversion. We have not yet heard him speak to Jews themselves.

At this point it would be well to read the little treatises *On Blessings and Curses* which are erroneously printed as the concluding part of the treatise *On Rewards and Punishments*.²¹ Here we have quite a new Philo again. He is clearly giving a speech or sermon on the necessity of keeping the law. It is a thoroughly Deuteronomic address. To those who are careful observers, especially of the laws governing the conduct of a farm, the blessings of long life, posterity, and prosperity will be given, and to those who disobey, the reverse. If the whole group is faithful, the Messianic Age of Jewish dominion over other peoples will be fulfilled. This document is unique in Philo's writings; yet there is no reason why Philo could not have written it, and read it to an audience with enthusiasm. Obviously he is addressing a popular group, and he is speaking the simple Judaism which has been

intelligible to the mass of Jews of all periods. Whatever depths and heights learned Jews may have seen in their religion, few of them could not have turned from their studies to give just such a sermon to a meeting of peasants. Short as it is, this treatise is of the greatest importance in showing that however rarefied Philo's idea may have become, he never lost sympathy with the Judaism of the humblest people.

The reader is now ready to go on to Philo's work for another group of Jews, the group whom he called the "initiates"; that is, those Jews who had learned to look beyond the letter of the Torah, and, through the lenses of allegory, to discern as the true objective of Jewish revelation a great new immaterial world of mystic accomplishment. This objective will not now seem entirely new. It was the Judaism, obviously, toward which the *Exposition* had been leading the enquiring gentile, and the only novelty will be the amazing ramifications and passionate mysticism with which Philo develops the theme for those who are ready to hear. To this subject Philo devoted a large series of treatises known, in contrast to the *Exposition*, as the *Allegory*.

The *Allegory* consists now of eighteen titles, twenty-one books, but was originally much longer. At least nine treatises are definitely known to be lost, and many of those which we have are incomplete.²² There is no way to tell whether the series extended much beyond its present limits. Philo apparently was working at the *Allegory* a good part of his life, and very possibly published each installment as he finished

it. It is impossible to say whether he had a definite plan in the work. Massebieau thought so,²³ and I did on different grounds,²⁴ but Cohn and others have denied it.

The *Allegory* was planned to make, as the title suggests, an allegory of the Biblical text, beginning, for some reason not explained, with the second chapter of Genesis and going on to the end. Cohn's characterization cannot be improved upon: "Philo attaches his lucubrations to the Biblical text, which he for the most part follows verse by verse; yet he never confines himself to the passage he is explaining, but wanders off, adduces related passages, and spreads himself out in the greatest detail over these and everything else connected with them, so that he seems in the process to have lost his thread." When a beginner reads these books for the first time, that description will seem an understatement. He will have forgotten the starting point over and again as he wanders through the mazes. Any subject, it would appear, can be discussed in any connection. The Biblical text is often, as Cohn says, dismissed as ridiculous and absurd in its literal sense, and becomes a springboard up into psychology, politics, mysticism, ethics, metaphysics, theories of education, and a dozen other subjects which appear at first to be stirred together with a spoon. For this reason we can give no such analysis of the *Allegory* as we gave of the *Exposition*. But I would not have it appear that I am disparaging the *Allegory* because I thus characterize it. It is Philo's greatest work, indescribably rich in every way, and

by the time the beginner has read Philo up to this point he will be ready to read it. But, I beg, do read it. Don't skip and skim. The greatest classics in religion are apt to appear just as formless to the reader. Plotinus is much more difficult to follow, and so is Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, to say nothing of the rabbinical classics. Philo meant these works to be read by initiates who knew the main points of his doctrines, and who would read them as books of devotion, as Christians read Thomas à Kempis, books which would be picked up again and again with new depths to be found at every reading. They do not expound in the sense of the *Exposition*, they simply meditate, as a sermon or a philosophic monologue which might well be quite unintelligible to an outsider. But one who has read the other works of Philo as I have suggested them will have come the road of Philo's proselytes, and will now be ready to listen to the earnest conversation of the inner group.

That this will lead into a world which can be compared closely only to the world of hellenistic mysticism seems still very obvious to me. There is occasional reference to the legal side of Judaism, and one striking passage in which Philo denounces those Jews whose concern with the mystical meaning of the Torah has led them to think that the literal meaning, and with it the obligation of legal observance, is no longer binding. Yet I cannot understand how a reader can fail to see that these offenders have only carried to a logical conclusion the line of argument, the point of view, which Philo himself everywhere assumes. True

Judaism is here epitomized in the meaning of the word Israel, which to Philo means the man or people which sees God. And the goal of all endeavor is to purify the soul from passions, achieve, by God's help, a state of virtue in the Greek sense of that term, and so in the end to be able to receive the higher union and vision. Into this subject we shall go in more detail in a later chapter. Here I am only advising the beginner that he read all the books of the *Allegory* through, slowly and carefully, as Philo expected his works to be read in his own generation.

With the completion of the *Allegory*, the beginner will be such no longer. He will have gone through the most important works of Philo. But there are other works which he should by no means neglect reading, and reading at once. The first of these is what we have left of Philo's third great series of writings, the series which he called *Questions and Answers*. This mammoth work is preserved less satisfactorily than any other of Philo's major series. We have only a few scattered fragments of it in Greek, and large sections, but only sections, in Armenian. This Armenian text was published over a century ago with a Latin translation.²⁵ The Latin translation has been twice republished,²⁶ and a good part of it was translated from Latin to English by Yonge in the fourth volume of the Bohn Philo. But since the publication of the Armenian text many additional manuscripts have been found, and the most serious gap in our Philo apparatus is that all this material is so generally inaccessible. A most pressing need is for a scholar, at once

a master of Armenian and of Philo's Greek, to edit the text and publish with it a critical and annotated translation into a modern language. Meanwhile, most Philonic scholars must use Aucher's Latin and Yonge's English as best they can.

This is all the more deplorable since the *Questions* is quite as important a work as any of Philo. The method is again commentary, but this time Philo discusses the text verse by verse, and usually under two heads, the literal meaning and the intellectual or mystical meaning. Each section is introduced by the "question": "What does it mean when it says"—and then a verse is quoted. The answers are sometimes a few lines, sometimes several pages, but usually about a page in length. The literal meaning seems always the interpretation which would be used by a preacher addressing such an audience as did Philo in his sermons *On Blessings and Curses*, and these literal interpretations have still not been exhausted for their testimony to popular, literalistic, Judaism in Egypt.²⁷ The accompanying mystical commentary is an invaluable supplement which fills in many gaps in the *Allegory*, and presents the same sort of Judaism. The work is, as I said, far from complete in the Armenian. We have four books of unequal length on Genesis, and two short ones on Exodus, but there is every reason to suppose that Philo actually did all of both Genesis and Exodus in this way (which would in itself double what we have), since every verse is considered in succession in our texts. Further, one fragment is preserved from Leviticus, while Philo himself

seems to refer in the *Allegory* to the *Questions on Numbers*, and promises in the *Questions* to continue through Deuteronomy.²⁸ If, as seems likely, the work went at least through Numbers, it was Philo's *magnum opus*, and can no more be neglected than the *magnum opus* of any other writer.

When the *Questions* has been read, there will remain only a few individual treatises. One is the little incomplete work *On the Indestructibility of the World*.²⁹ Here Philo argues that the physical world could neither have been created nor ever perish. He quotes learnedly from Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and later philosophers. His real concern is to attack Stoicism with its doctrine of cyclic creation and destruction. Occasional reference is made to Biblical material, but the book as a whole is written from the point of view of a Platonist and Aristotelian who resents the doctrines of the Stoics. The book is only the beginning of an extended treatise, as the last sentence indicates.

Another treatise is that *On the Virtuous Being also Free*, to give Yonge's title,³⁰ though a more literal translation is *On the Fact that Every Virtuous Man is Free*. This is the second part of a pair, of which the first, now lost, bore the title *On the Fact that Every Wicked Man is a Slave*. The argument in this treatise is as close to Stoic ethics as that of the foregoing treatise was opposed to Stoic cosmology. The chief examples of the wise man are Moses, the Essenes, the Indian gymnosophist Calanus, and a number of others from Greek history and literature.

The treatise *On Providence* is preserved in two books, but only in Armenian. It was translated by Aucher into Latin, but never into a modern language. Massebieau³¹ doubted the validity of the first book; Wendland³² defended it. It is an extremely important treatise for the philosophic ideas of Philo, and indeed, as Wendland has shown, for the history of post-Aristotelian philosophy. Here again Philo sides with Stoicism, but against the Sceptics and Epicureans, in the interest of the activity of providence in the world.

The last treatise is in the form of a discussion between Philo and his nephew Alexander on the subject which its title indicates: *Alexander, or On the Question Whether Dumb Animals Have the Power of Reason*. Alexander takes the affirmative, Philo the negative in this interesting dialogue.³³

The student who has come to this point has done what relatively few people have ever done—read Philo through. It will have been a long task, but I shall be surprised if he has not become a Philo addict in the process. One of the things that must have impressed him, as it has so rarely impressed those who only dabble in Philo, is the many-sidedness, the versatility of the man. Such problems as have interested most workers in Philo, problems of the specific meaning of this or that collection of passages upon some detail, will seem still important, but of so much less importance when the magnitude of the man as a whole stands before his eyes. He will have come to know the great leader of a great people in a great period of their history. Philo's detailed knowledge of

men, philosophy, politics, natural science, law Jewish and pagan, psychology, and ethics impresses one only less than the sublime spirit, simplicity transcending complexity, in which all these things are brought together. With such an understanding of Philo the student will indeed beware of easy formulae for the “essence of Philo’s position.” The “key” to understanding Philo will at last appear to be not his Judaism, his mysticism, his Stoicism, his Platonism, or any of the other aspects of the man, but the man himself.

NOTES—CHAPTER II

1. Emil Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi* (4th ed., Leipzig), III (1911), §34, I. English translation (Edinburgh, 1893), II, iii, §34, I.
2. L. Massebieau, “Le classement des œuvres de Philon,” *Bibliothèque de l’École des Hautes Études . . . Sciences religieuses*, I (1889), 1–91.
3. Leopold Cohn, “Einteilung und Chronologie der Schriften Philos,” *Philologus*, Supplbd., VII, iii (1899), 387–435. Published separately, Leipzig, 1899. For reviews see the *Bibliography*, No. 808.
4. Wm. Schmid, in the 6th edition of William Christ, *Geschichte der griechischen Litteratur*, II, i (1920), 625 ff. (I. von Müller, *Handbuch der klassischen Altertums-Wissenschaft*, VII.)
5. Cohn, *op. cit.*, 421–424, largely followed Massebieau, *op. cit.*, 65–78. They seem better here than Schürer. On the purpose of the *Legatio* the reader will get much from H. Leisegang, “Philons Schrift über die Gesandtschaft der alexandrinischen Juden an den Kaiser Gaius Caligula,” *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LVII (1938), 377–405, and from *Philonis Alexandrini in Flaccum*, edited with an Introduction, Translation, and Commentary, by Herbert Box, London, 1939.
6. In my *Philo’s Politics*, Chap. I. Here the political realism of the two documents is elaborated.
7. For this literature see the *Bibliography*, pp. 282–289.
8. The English reader will best use E. H. Gifford’s translation, Oxford, 1903.

9. See my "Philo's Exposition of the Law and his *de vita Mosis*," *Harvard Theological Review*, XXVII (1933), 109–125.
10. This theory is discussed more fully below, pp. 87 f.
11. See the work cited, note 9 above.
12. See *By Light, Light*, 122.
13. See my *Philo's Politics*, Chap. III.
14. See *By Light, Light*, 123–125.
15. See my "Literal Mystery in Hellenistic Judaism," *Quantulumque* (London, 1937), 236–241, and below, pp. 203 ff.
16. *The Jurisprudence of the Jewish Courts in Egypt*. New Haven, 1929.
17. See above, pp. 12–15.
18. See above, pp. 14 f.
19. *Philos Werke in deutscher Übersetzung*, II, 316 f.
20. The *Exposition*, as we have it, closes at *Praem.* 78. The sections which follow in the Cohn-Wendland text will be considered shortly.
21. On the independent nature of this treatise, see my "Philo's Exposition of the Law and his *de vita Mosis*," *Harvard Theological Review*, XXVII (1933), 119–124.
22. The analysis of L. Cohn, *Einteilung und Chronologie der Schriften Philos* (Leipzig, 1899), 393–402 (reprint from *Philologus, Supplementband VII*), is still the best for the tradition of these books and for the lost portions. The treatises of the *Allegory* now preserved are *LA* i, ii, iii; *Cher.*, *Sacr.*, *Pot.*, *Post.*, *Gig.*, *Immut.*, *Agr.*, *Plant.*, *Ebr.*, *Sobr.*, *Conf.*, *Migr.*, *Heres*, *Congr.*, *Fug.*, *Mut.*, and *Som.* i, ii.
23. See above, p. 62, n. 2.
24. I have attempted to trace a continuity of thought from *Conf.* to *Fug.* in *By Light, Light*, 245–255.
25. For full titles see the *Bibliography*, Nos. 440, 441.
26. In the edition of Philo's *Opera Omnia* by [C. E. Richter] (Leipzig, 1828–30), VI, VII; and in the Tauchnitz stereotype reprint of this edition in the Tauchnitz texts, Leipzig, 1851–53 (reprinted 1880–93), VI, VII. See the *Bibliography*, Nos. 413, 420.
27. A good start was made by M. J. Shroyer, "Alexandrian Jewish Literalists," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LV (1936), 261–284.
28. See L. Cohn, *op. cit.*, 403.
29. Yonge's translation uses the equivalent term *On the Incorruptibility*.
30. Yonge, III, 506–540.
31. *Op. cit.*, 87–90.
32. *Philo's Schrift über die Vorsehung*. Berlin, 1892 (*Bibl.* 821).

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33. It is especially discussed by Georg Tappe, *De Philonis Libro qui inscribitur Ἀλέξανδρος ή περὶ τοῦ λόγου ἔχειν τὰ ἄλογα ζῷα: Quaestiones selectae*, Diss. Göttingen, 1912. Cohn has shown that it was written after A.D. 12, and hence when Philo was probably at least thirty to forty years of age. I should guess that it must have been written later. Alexander, we have seen (see above, p. 9), was probably born not much if any before A.D. 20. If he had already published a treatise before the dialogue was written, as is here stated, the *Dialogue* must have been one of Philo's later writings.

CHAPTER III

THE POLITICAL THINKER

THE first step in the procedure outlined at the beginning has now been taken. Theoretically the reader will have finished a complete reading of Philo, from which he has formed initial impressions of Philo's personality. These are first an impression of a man who never tired of infinite ramifications in expounding and defending a central idea which passionately obsessed him, the idea that the deeper content of Judaism was a revelation of the concepts of Platonic and Pythagorean philosophy, Stoic and Platonic ethics, and of the way to reach the reality behind those conceptions in mystic ascent. With this will have come other impressions, such as those indicated at the close of the last chapter, especially Philo's many-sided interests, his great concern with contemporary politics and especially with the problem of the Jewish people under Roman rule, and his loyalty to the life and traditions of his people.

Politics in Philo's day, for the upper officials, at least, was an extremely precarious career. The task of a non-Roman who was struggling to protect the rights of one of the subject races was doubly uncertain. Philo lived in four coincident political frames, to all of which he had to pay heed: there was the Jewish political organization in Egypt, long officially recognized with its own courts and officers, which

must run smoothly both within itself and in connection with the second political unit; that is, with the Roman government of Egypt and Alexandria. Beyond these local political units were the two larger ones analogous to them, the Jewish people as a whole, in Palestine as well as elsewhere, and the Roman empire as a whole. Trouble in any one of these political units would instantly be reflected in the other three, and trouble was always imminent in them all. The spirit of Roman rule is most closely represented in modern times by fascism, for Augustus and his successors were fascist rulers in the sense that there was no constitutional warrant for their authority. It had been accepted by an exhausted people when the forces of a single adventurer seemed more acceptable than continued civil war under republican forms. This fascist power, which began with proscriptions, exiles, and civil murders on a great scale, was effective, and, once settled, fairly liberal on any point except its own despotic power. From subject peoples little was asked except complete submission and the prompt payment of very high taxes. The Greeks could continue to be Greeks, the Egyptians Egyptians, the Jews Jews, so long as they recognized the rulership and unique privileges of Romans, and did as they were told in matters of finance. The Romans were wise enough in the provinces to let sleeping dogs lie, and since the people of the majority of the provinces had for so many centuries been subjected by conqueror after conqueror, most of them asked little better than to be sleeping dogs.

All but the Jews (and Alexandrians). In the Roman world what more than any other one thing served to break down the barriers of civilization after civilization, and permitted free intercourse between all other peoples, was religious syncretism. That Venus was the same as Astarte and Aphrodite, and a dozen other local female deities—Venus, Aphrodite, or Demeter, what did it matter?—was a conception which enhanced the value of each local deity in the eyes of its devotees. But Yahweh was different: to identify him, as the later Seleucids tried to do, with Zeus or Dionysus was a signal for war to the death, signal to at least a part of the Jews. The Jews of Philo's day could not forget that on this issue the Maccabees had been successful, and religious devotion had become inextricably infused with national patriotism. The Palestine of Philo's day was a pot of boiling oil which was soon to boil over, catch fire, and burn to the bottom of the pot. That is, religious syncretism, one of the chief binding forces of the empire, stirred the Jews alone to rebellion. The test issue, that of sharing in the imperial cult, was just arising in Philo's time, and he faced a problem which was really hopeless.

Much as Philo deplored the situation, he was not one to compromise on essential points. He, like Josephus, quotes a law unknown in the Bible, which absolutely prohibits any sort of disrespect to pagan gods, idols, or temples.¹ He suggests that the Jews themselves punished such offenses with death, and I have no doubt that they did so. It was the only pos-

sible attitude for the Jewish community to take. If some mad Jew should go today into a Catholic cathedral and defile the high altar, other Jews, far from defending him, would unite in demanding against him the extreme penalty of the law. Similarly, when sacrilege in temples was a capital crime among gentiles, Jews must have been ready to anticipate the gentiles in executing a fanatical Jew whose folly imperiled all the Jewish group. That was in the interest of safety. But Philo was quite willing to give his own life, and risk the very existence of his people, in resistance to their being forced themselves to participate in pagan worship.

In such a condition caution must never relax. It was impossible for Philo or his brother the Alabarch to go to the prefect, or to the emperor, and set terms and conditions for the Jewish people. On propitious occasions they could supplicate for privileges. But the Romans had been very generous in continuing the special favors and conditions given to Jews in hellenistic cities by the early Diodochs, and all the Jews could really hope was the perpetuation of these concessions. For this only one thing was needed, the good nature of the ruler: hence Jewish political activity consisted, in dealing with the Romans, largely in flattery, obsequiousness, and insinuation. This was a necessity not for Jews alone. It had long been the only possible way for any subject to approach his ruler, as it has always been the only way to handle tyrants. When the Jews of Palestine angered the Romans by insistent demands and assertion of their

“rights” they were far less realistic politicians than the Greeks who met the Romans with flattery and deification.

Philo was fully aware of this situation. He expressed it in one of the most vital passages from ancient literature. True, it is tucked in as a digression in one of his scriptural allegories for the initiates, but that, we understand, was a place where it could safely hope to avoid the danger of Roman notice. It is long, but too important not to quote at length:²

As the good man is an observer not only of human life but also of things in the universe, he is well aware how mightily may blow the winds of necessity, chance, opportunity, force, and lordly power (*δυναστεία*), as well as what plans and achievements, though mounting to heaven, these same forces have scattered and destroyed by merely holding their breath. Consequently he will feel obliged to shield himself with caution (*εὐλάβεια*), for caution is the proper protection against one's suffering sudden calamity, since it seems to me that caution is for an individual what its wall is for a city. So then are those people not out of their wits, completely mad, who are rash enough to display inopportune frankness, and dare at times to speak and act in defiance of kings and tyrants? They do not seem to perceive that they are not only like animals putting their necks under the yoke, but that they are betraying their whole bodies and souls, as well as their wives and children and that large kindred crowd and community of companions and relations. Now it is possible for the charioteer and driver with all freedom to goad his horses and urge them on, or to check them and hold them back and mete

out any treatment small or great just as he wishes. So they are branded and beaten and mutilated and suffer before they die every savage and pitiless torture, and then are led away to execution and killed.

These are the rewards of untimely frankness, not of frankness as used by people of discriminating judgment, but the rewards [emendation of Colson] allotted to silliness, madness, and incurable insanity. What? you say. When a person sees a winter storm raging, and a heavy adverse gale, and a hurricane rushing down and piling up the sea with waves, a time when one ought to lie in a harbor, does he set sail and put out to sea? What pilot or skipper was ever so drunk or maddened by wine that while such storms as I have described were raging he would want to cast off, when his ship would be swamped by the seas rushing over it and be swallowed up with its crew? The man who wants to sail in safety must wait for a favorable wind, one that is propitious and gentle. And what? When a person sees a bear or a wild boar or a lion sweeping down upon him, and ought to pacify and mollify the beast, does he inflame it and tantalize it, until he actually offers himself as a banquet and feast to the pitiless carnivores? Is it true that one gets nothing by trying to oppose spiders and Egyptian asps and other creatures which bear destructive poison, and inflict sure death upon those they attack? Surely it is far better to use incantations and make them manageable and so to escape suffering calamity from them.

Are there not certain men who are more savage and treacherous than boars, spiders, and asps, men whose treachery and hostility can be escaped only by mollifying and propitiating them? So for example Abraham the wise man did obeisance (*προσκυνήσει*) to the sons of

Chet (whose name means those who “disperse”), because the emergency convinced him he must do so. He did not consent to this act of obeisance because he honored those who by race and habit were the natural enemies of reason, and who “disperse,” fritter away, and piteously squander education, the coin of the soul; but he feared their present power and irresistible strength and took care not to provoke them. In this way he could preserve that great and powerful treasure and achievement of virtue, that best dwelling place of wise souls, the double cave, which he could not occupy when fighting and warring, but only when he was cultivating and serving reason (or the Logos).

What? Are not we also, as we loiter in the market place, often “dispersed” by the rulers, and “dispersed” by the beasts of burden? But we “disperse” for each from a quite different motive; for we give way to the rulers out of honor, but to the beasts out of fear lest we be injured by them. Now when occasion offers it is a good thing to oppose our enemies and to destroy their power of attack ($\betaί\alpha$), but lacking such opportunity it is safe to keep quiet, while if one wishes to get any benefit from them it is advantageous to propitiate them.

This seems to be plain enough. The Jews could hardly have mistaken Philo’s meaning, and Machiavelli himself, had he written from the point of view of the prince’s subjects, could have given no more realistic advice. Beasts and asps the Jew may well consider the Romans in his heart, but they must be handled softly and propitiated by any man who does not want to ruin himself and his people together. The sarcasm at the end is obvious. Philo has compared harsh rulers to

savage and deadly animals throughout. When he mentions how in the market place the Jews have to make place for their rulers and the pack animals alike, it is part of the very caution he is counseling that he should distinguish between the two, once the rulers in Alexandria have been distinctly referred to, and say that one gives way out of honor to the rulers, but out of fear to the beasts. If the passage were called into question, he could insist that the first part was perfectly general and had no reference to the Romans, while he had properly indicated that one gives way to Romans out of honor. But his Jewish readers would quite well have understood that the reason Philo gave way to each was the same, because he knew that if he did not he would be crushed. And the Jews would also have understood by the last sentence that if Philo had been able to destroy the Roman power he would gladly have done so. The propitiating attitude he was advising was the only one a sensible Jew or other non-Roman subject in the empire could take under existing circumstances. But he loved the Romans no more than the skipper of a tiny boat loves a hurricane.

In my study of Philo's politics, which I am here largely summarizing,³ I have pointed out that Philo gives three different types of political discussion: first, that in his avowedly political treatises, those *Against Flaccus* and *The Embassy to Gaius*; secondly, the discussion of political matters found in the *Exposition* addressed to gentile enquirers, especially that in the treatise *On Joseph*; and thirdly, the po-

itical references, of which I have just quoted a sample, in the writings addressed to the Jewish inner circle. It is only by following another principle of our methodology, that of studying Philo's passages with reference to the treatises from which they are taken, that sense emerges from the contradictions between his various political allusions.

The first of these types of treatment of the political situation seems to me exceedingly astute. The treatises *Against Flaccus* and *The Embassy to Gaius* were written in connection with a pogrom which threatened to exterminate the hundreds of thousands of Jews in Alexandria. At first the storm center was the prefect, Flaccus, who not only failed to protect the Jews but openly encouraged the rioters. It is with the prefect and his responsibility that the treatise *Against Flaccus* is concerned. But larger issues were involved. Since the point was the Jewish refusal to do religious homage to the emperor's statue, appeal had to be taken to Gaius himself. Philo led to Rome the embassy designated to present this plea, and at once he found himself confronted with a situation in which not only Alexandria, but the Jews in Palestine and all the Roman world were involved. *The Embassy to Gaius* tells this part of the story. There is not space to analyze these documents in detail. They are both incomplete, and contradict each other on a number of essential points. In *Against Flaccus* Philo presents the emperor Gaius in a favorable light: it was he who put a stop to the pogrom by sending in an army which protected the Jews and overthrew and exiled

Flaccus. In *The Embassy* Gaius is the perfect villain. No mention is made of any help he sent the Jews, and apparently there was no mitigation of the pogrom until after Gaius' death. It is unthinkable that the pogrom, as Philo describes it, could have lasted thus indefinitely. That several hundred thousand people could have lived for several years on the seashore, under constant attack, their property entirely confiscated, is incredible, especially as it is known that on the accession of Claudius they were still strong enough to launch a serious counterattack against the Greeks of Alexandria.

Obviously Philo is not interested in an impartial narrative of what happened. Why, then, did he write these treatises? Analysis has convinced me that they were written as definite political propaganda. The first document is really the story of how Flaccus prospered as long as he was friendly to the Jews, but how he collapsed, was disgraced, and speedily executed, as a result of having persecuted the chosen people. There is probably little truth in Philo's analysis of Roman motives. The army from Caligula seems to have come to oust a man who had the misfortune to belong to a faction which had not favored Gaius' succession to the throne, and which Gaius was accordingly hounding to extinction in all quarters. Philo changes this into the assertion that Flaccus' downfall was really an act of God who would always protect his people and destroy those who persecuted them. The treatise was written, it would seem, when the Jews were striking back at the Alexandrians; that is,

when the Jews were properly confident of Claudius' sympathies, for they were at least partially justified by Claudius when the matter was finally referred to him. For once Philo could let his caution become transparent. He wrote this document, I am convinced, to give it to the new prefect. He does not, still, dare to give direct instructions to the prefect, but he has so obviously schematized the events of the past few years and the reasons for the fall of Flaccus that the new prefect must perfectly have understood that he was faced with a people whom one offended at one's peril. The fabricated intervention of Gaius for the Jews was a reference to the new emperor's support which the prefect knew well the Jews were justified in assuming. The prefect could not touch Philo for writing as he did. Flaccus alone was attacked, and he was dead and unmourned. But the new prefect would have read the document very carefully, and remembered it often if he were as intelligent politically as most Romans.

The *Embassy* is no less realistic and pointed. Leisegang has just published an elaborate analysis to prove that it is a treatise on the virtues of the Jews and of God in contrast with the vices of the Romans. This may be true, but still misses the practical political note which seems to me the incentive of the document. For Philo wrote the treatise, I am sure, to be read by the emperor Claudius, or, less likely, Nero, to show to him what he showed to the prefect; namely, that an emperor touched Jewish people and religious observances at his peril. The completely different ac-

count of the Alexandrian pogrom seems to me explicable only on this basis. For the instruction of the prefect he had shown that even the wicked Gaius served as God's avenger when he sent in an army, protected the Jews, and arrested and condemned an offending prefect. No such solution is found in the *Embassy*. Here all depends upon the will of the emperor, and under Gaius that will was steadily perverse. Philo will not directly present the new emperor with a lecture on ideal kingship, but he devotes several pages to such a lecture directed to Gaius by Macro, and shows how Gaius' perversion of true kingship was one of the causes of his downfall. Philo does not himself point out that the strength of Jewry throughout the empire is something which should give even the emperor pause, but he is careful to have the imperial favorite, Herod Agrippa, do so. Still a model of obsequiousness on the surface, that surface has become almost transparent with the new sense of security which the fall of Gaius and Flaccus produced. Philo is truly the Jewish champion, ready to die for the people and the law which are dearer to him than life, but, bold as he can be under favorable conditions, he still never loses his astute sense of where to stop.

If I am right in thus reading these documents, it is apparent not only that Philo could fish with skill in the troubled waters of imperial politics but that he was writing as though he was still the political spokesman of Alexandrian Jewry.

Meanwhile, how did he actually regard these Ro-

mans? This attitude seems to me clearly expressed in the allegories of Joseph which appear in the *Allegory*, the series of treatises designed for the inner group of Jews, and intelligible only to them. Here Joseph appears a deep-dyed villain, the *politicus*, in characteristic rebellion against the ascetic and orderly virtue which Jacob and his other eleven sons represented. Why this allegory has seemed to me a reference to Romans requires an elaborate demonstration which I cannot here repeat.⁴ Three terms used in the allegory become almost a cipher by which Philo refers to Romans, especially to the Roman governing class living in Alexandria: they possess only $\kappa\epsilon\nu\eta\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$, empty opinion in contrast with knowledge of truth; their character is $\tau\bar{u}\phi\sigma$, arrogance; and they are “additions” to true society in the same derogatory sense that suckers are additions to a healthy tree. Not yet has the husbandman appeared who will hack off this injurious growth at the very roots. These code references to Romans are surprisingly numerous and consistent. The Romans, especially the haughty ruling class, were really to him slaves of empty opinion, slavish in character, seeking the baubles of life, thrusting themselves up like Joseph’s sheaf and expecting obeisance, even worship, from the followers of truth. This obeisance can never be given. The sheaves may bow in caution, but when the dream becomes the sun, that divine symbol, before which the others bow, then the brothers and the father together must resist to the death. Death, Philo assures his fellows, is not a terrible thing in such a case, for it is a martyrdom which

means immediate transfer to the realms of eternal light. That is, Jews may yield to the brute force of the hated Romans, but must prefer death to recognizing their divinity.

Such hatred Philo could hardly publish freely. To the gentiles he interprets Joseph in completely different terms.⁵ Joseph is still the type of the Roman prefect in Egypt. But he has been transformed into a highly ideal person. His brothers who resist him, instead of being ideal characters, now represent the vices of envy and selfishness which Joseph must, by sheer force of superior character, soften and control. Joseph had the ideal training for rulership, first as a shepherd, since by almost universal tradition the ruler was the shepherd of his people; then, according at least to Greek theory, in household management in the estate of Potiphar. Joseph was always, says Philo, instinctively recognized as the ideal ruler because that was his God-given character. The brothers might resist, but with them as with Potiphar and even the jailer, his powers were undeniable. At last he became the one ideal prefect of Egypt—for his vicegerency under Pharaoh is made a detailed parallel with the prefect under the Roman emperor.

Such a complete reversal in interpreting Joseph can come only from a change in the audience addressed. Joseph is the *politicus*: for gentiles he becomes an excuse for flattery of the office and suggestion of the way gentiles should rule their subjects—firmly but with every care for the interests of the subjects, and especially with care for the various legal

traditions of the realm. Honesty, avoidance of graft, and especially protection of those elements (the Jews) who will support the ruler in all his efforts for justice and peace, these are the qualifications exemplified in Joseph. For Jews Joseph is the enemy of all that they hold sacred, the Roman who will be hacked away by the axe of the coming true husbandman. In brief, Philo detests the Roman political power and longs for the day of its overthrow, but with realistic caution will praise Roman rulers to their face in the hope that they will help and support the Jews.

How does a Philo of such political realism square with the man who produced the great mass of mystical and metaphysical allegory we normally and properly associate with him? Here we must recall the protest against political life which was quoted in the first chapter. There Philo told us that "there was once a time" when he had devoted himself entirely to philosophy and contemplation, but had been forced to leave this to take up an active political career in which, immersed as he was, he still took time for retreat in mystic contemplation and to write his allegories of the Scriptures. This, I repeat, must be taken literally. Philo lived a double life, of one half of which we have an elaborate record, of the other half only these hints.⁶ Just what offices he held, except that of heading the legation to Rome, there is no way to discover, though I suspect from his great interest in law that his primary duty was legal administration of the Jews under imperial supervision. But that is only a guess. Yet, lost as is his actual political career, I

can read all his writings only as I read the writings of Gladstone and Disraeli, who likewise solaced themselves from political cares by writing and study. Of the vast political activity of the time, the horde of men engaged in it, we have only the records of Josephus and the Romans, and the fragmentary information of the papyri. That Philo was thus divided in his interest we have evidence not only in these four autobiographical references, and in the political writings, but in a number of passages where he discusses, often with great contradiction, the relative value of the practical and the contemplative life. Sometimes he scorns any concern whatever with material or social life; at other times he insists just as strongly that running away from life is cowardice and hypocrisy, and that nothing is to be gained by it. More characteristically he tries to combine the two, by insisting either that the doors of mystical and philosophic achievement can open only to men who have first purified themselves by conquering the problems of personal and social life, or that the man who stops with contemplation is really incomplete, since the fully developed character will come back to matter and men, as Plato's visionaries returned to the cave, to help others by the new integration and victory which their own higher insight had given them. It is arbitrary to say that any one of these attitudes is the "true Philo." The "true Philo" was, I repeat, like the true Smith or the true Jones, the Philo of the moment. But arbitrary as it is, I must confess that to me

the Philo of more moments than others was one who believed that he was the son of a father and mother, divine law and civil law, and that while, if a man were to obey only one of these, he should by all means choose allegiance to the divine or mystical world and its laws, the highest type of man was the one who honored both parents and obeyed each in its own sphere.

Yet it can never be forgotten that, if one side of his life's interests had to perish, Philo would have been content that we know his life of thought rather than of action. The world of true reality was for him the immaterial, and as truth existed only in the ideal world, so Philo himself would have insisted that he himself was real only insofar as he penetrated into and abode in the supernal. This is true of any thoughtful man with ideals. Which are our true selves? The men who greet one another in the morning, carry on business, and jest over cigars in the evening, or the people we dream of being, what Freud calls our superego? We are no more consistent about this than Philo himself. We do not often want to have our daily lives judged by our own ideals. But we know that if any of our numerous personalities were to survive, we should select the personality of our ideals. It was Philo's great privilege, as it is the privilege of any great author, to have survived largely in his own ideal form. The only excuse for peering through the screen to get glimpses of the Philo of everyday life is that Philo is so extraordi-

narily interesting, and that it is good to remind ourselves that the true Philo of most of his writings is really the super-Philo.

We cannot leave Philo the *politicus*, however, until we have considered his very interesting ideas on political theory. He began with a conception which perhaps was as old as Heraclitus, and which later came to be the basis of Augustine's profoundly influential ideas, the conception that there are two states, that of God or nature, and that of human organization. These two should be joined in the sense that the man-made state should be a material counterpart of the city of God. Unfortunately the civil organization in which Philo lived was far short of this ideal. Philo tells us little of the heavenly city, but a number of scattered remarks fit together too well not to have come from a formulated notion, a notion which we described briefly in Chapter Two as the supreme Law which became incarnate in the Patriarchs. God, the source of all things except unformed matter, is the source of all regulation of what is beneath him. He is essentially abstracted from all other things, but his very existence has the result that a flow of power streams forth from him. The analogy for this was the sun with its rays, and to the metaphysical and mystical implications of the theory we shall return in another chapter. So far as politics is concerned, this stream, the *Logos* or *Sophia*, is the stream of rulership and Law. It is not only the creative power, but also the governing. Its very nature is the Law of the universe which it produces. This is not a hard notion

to understand. In a home the father is in his personal character the law of the home. The law will differ in one home from that in another as the father's nature is different; it will be similar where there are similar fathers (and, of course, mothers). Every specific command the father gives will spring from this personal source, will be a reduction of his character to specific injunctions. That is, it will be if he is not a hypocritical parent who holds up one ideal for his children, and another for his own guidance; even then his laws for his children will reflect the superego which he knows he ought to be. With God and the Logos there is no such dualism. The nature of God as it truly is sets the norm, and conformity with the nature of God is identical with obedience to his law. This is an idea common to both Greek philosophy and Judaism, and, while Philo develops it in a much more Greek than Jewish way, it was the essential bridge by which he brought his Judaism and Greek idealism together.

From the point of view of God this rule is, like the rule of a father in the home, monarchy. But the Logos which streams out from God manifests itself in a thousand ways as it forms first the heavenly bodies, then the grossly material world of this earth; it forms, especially on this earth, a vast number of things which are essentially of equal merit. The material world is then a monarchy in that it gets its regulation from above, but it is a democracy within itself insofar as all created things (except man, and even men among themselves) are equal before the higher reality of the

Logos-Law. Man, by the fact that he is not wholly a material thing, but contains, as his soul, an immediate spark or seed of the immaterial reality, is thus a citizen of the Universal State. As such he is called to live in the immaterial, has the mystic and ascetic urge which, we have seen, had so powerful an attraction for Philo.

If all men were perfect there would be no need of further laws. It is the sinfulness of man which compels the organization of a political state in addition. This idea Philo has beautifully epitomized:⁷

State organization as it appears among the various peoples is an “addition” to Nature which has sovereign power over all things. For this world is the Megalopolis, or Great City, and uses a single constitution and a single law, and this is the Logos of Nature which enjoins what is to be done, and prohibits what is not to be done. But the variously situated states are unlimited in number and use different constitutions and dissimilar laws; for the different states various customs and laws have been invented and enacted in addition [to the law of Nature]. Now the cause [of such disparity] is the lack of intermingling and of social life not only between Greeks and barbarians, or barbarians and Greeks, but also within a single race between people of the same kin. Men seem to lay the blame [for their lack of intercourse or their bad laws] where it does not belong, as they point to bad times, failure of crops, poverty of soil, or to their geographical location by the sea or inland or on an island or the mainland, or to some other such geographical factor. But they do not mention the true reason, their greed and faithlessness toward each other, which lead

them, since they are not pleased with the laws of Nature, to decree as “laws” whatever the crowd unites in supposing will be of public benefit. Thus naturally the individual constitutions are an “addition” to the one constitution of Nature; for the civic laws are “additions” to the right reason ($\delta\beta\theta\delta\kappa\lambda\gamma\omega\zeta$) of Nature, and the politician is an “addition” to the man who lives according to Nature.

If we will recall that by “nature” Philo, like the Stoics, meant “God,” but meant his own type of God, not at all the God of the Stoics, this passage is perfectly clear, and we understand more fully what Philo had in mind when he called the politicus a “superfluous addition,” one who was motivated usually by empty opinion in contrast with metaphysical truth, and why it is human “arrogance” which is the real motive of the human state as it is. Quite in accordance with this, in another connection,⁸ Philo says that the one true manifestation of divine Law in the form of a social code, the Jewish law, had to be given to a people in the desert where they were isolated from the pressures and entanglements of ordinary life.

Presumptuous as men are in their civic organizations, they are still not cut off from the cosmic, deterministic democracy of the Logos. On this basis Philo explains the rise and fall of states. He calls the roll of empires,⁹ Greece, Macedonia, Persia, Parthia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Carthage, Libya, and Pontus (Rome is conspicuously absent, for obvious reasons) and says that each of them, except the then-powerful Parthia, has had to decline. This is not chance, Philo

says, but a manifestation of a great cyclic movement of the Logos; for the Logos,

which is in constant flux ($\alpha\epsilon\iota\ \rho\acute{e}\omega\nu$) makes distribution city by city, nation by nation, country by country. What these had once, those have now. What all had, all have. Only from time to time are the possessions of each exchanged back and forth, to the end that the inhabited world might as a whole be like a single state and enjoy the best of constitutions, a democracy.

That is, to change the figure, the Logos is an ocean, a fixed entity, but it is constantly moving, and as it moves it throws up towering waves which are quickly recalled when other waves emerge. So the Logos is subject to temporary concentrations, empires or states, which have no permanent significance. They are severally like a private citizen in a democracy who is elected to a public office where he temporarily towers above his fellows, only to be reabsorbed in the mass when his term expires.

From this point of view each state is a product of the Logos itself: it is so since everything is under God with the characteristics he gave it in creation. We are getting close to the problem of evil in a good world created by an omnipotent and good God, a problem which Philo solved no more than anyone else. God's hand, he compromises, never loses the general direction of human material affairs. Nonetheless the states organized by man are the product of their fallen natures. To such a paradox theism always runs, in this or another form. The simple fact, so far as states are

concerned, is that their laws, which should, like the Mosaic law, be codifications of the Law of Nature, are very far from being so. The actual state is not, as it should be, the material reflection of the heavenly state. The selfish ambition of man against man, tribe against tribe, state against state makes it impossible for true law to exist in cities.

This men had recognized for ages before Philo. Was there no hope that the earthly city could ever be the material counterpart of the heavenly city, and so itself a force in the lives of men to direct them to the truth? For millennia the answer had been the same. If a ruler could be found who would be more than human, he might be the link between the two cities which was so desperately needed. He might be the divine son of God, miraculously born and sustained as he was in Egypt and Babylonia; he might be the incarnation of the Light-Law of the universe as he was in Persia, and came to be in the hellenistic kingdoms; he might be Plato's and Aristotle's philosopher king, whose perception of reality went beyond that of ordinary human beings. Or he might be the Lord's anointed of the Jewish kingdom, especially favored by God so long as he faithfully obeyed the will of God in his rulership. The motive and essential result were always the same, the idea of a person who would bring the rule of the heavenly city to establish a just and happy city on earth. This dream was capitalized by the actual rulers, however villainous or indifferent they might be, to strengthen their power over the subjects. Elaborate ceremonies of respect or worship were re-

quired in every court. The king could do no wrong, it was everywhere held, because while he codified in his decrees the Law of Nature for men, told them what was "right" and "wrong," he himself was essentially a citizen of the heavenly city: subject to its standards alone, he could not be judged by the laws which regulated the conduct of others. Still the state has this superhuman prerogative. It may kill, imprison, confiscate property, do a hundred things which the citizen may not do. Only, in the ancient dream, the king was truly the state in all its departments, and lesser officials were all merely his assistants. In such a condition, with men under the sway almost everywhere of despotic rulers who were in fact the state, the result was inevitable. People tried, by flattery, to keep the ideal before the actual rulers, however absurd it sounded when applied to them, in the hope that they would take it seriously and really try to make their requirements have at least a semblance of enlightenment and justice. As soon as democracy failed in Rome the idea began instantly to invade even the capital city, while it was applied freely to the Roman conquerors in the East a century before the final conquest of Octavian.

To the existence, the power, of this conception of the king Philo is one of the most important witnesses, for he accepts it freely, and gives it many ramifications not found in other sources.¹⁰ He holds the ideal before the Roman rulers, and praises Augustus and Tiberius as he condemns Gaius, by its standard. Flaccus, the vicegerent, conformed to it in his early days

as prefect, when Egypt was in an ideal condition, but wrecked society and himself when he later abandoned it. Philo introduces several interesting new points from Judaism into his predominantly Greek formulation of the theory. First he brings in the prophetic notion that the tyrant is a usurper whom God allows temporarily to get into power because of the faults of men. When the sinners have been adequately punished the tyrant will be removed. This is an expression of the king-theory which continued on into modern thinking. Again Philo says that since the early kings were priests (and Moses the king is thereby priest) it is clear "that those ruling over others must themselves be subject to those who worship God." This statement, buried in the *Questions*, meant that the Roman rulers must show respect to those who truly worshiped God, the Jews.¹¹

The theory finds its most Jewish expression when Philo applies it to the Messianic Age.¹² At a time when the Jewish people shall have at last developed political leaders who, like the guardians of Plato's *Republic*, are able to guide the people according to the truth of immaterial reality; when the Jews as a whole shall have been transformed into virtue; then a deliverer will come who will be more divine than human. He will lead them all back together from the ends of the earth, destroy the false growth of the power of nations, and set up a kingdom in which the true democracy of nature will at last appear, the equality of every man in the heavenly city of which all are at last citizens. The Jews will then be the

bankers of the world, and not only will the lion lie down with the lamb, but bears, lions, and leopards, and those beasts found in India, elephants and tigers, will at the approach of man wag their tails like Maltese lap dogs with a cheerful motion. Here is the kingly ideal completely realized in the dream of the Messiah and the coming Age.

Philo could go the whole way with the theory for the Jewish Messiah, and, while he found the political implications of the notion realized in the past only in the work of Moses, we have seen and shall see in greater detail how the ideal was projected upon the saving Patriarchs in the Mystery. In describing the Patriarchs Philo felt no difficulty in talking about a nature that was more than human. But when he came to the claim of a superhuman or divine nature for the Roman rulers he suddenly drew the line. In theory he did not do so. One statement is preserved which might have come from any pagan:¹³

In his material substance (*οὐσία*) the king is just the same as any man, but in the authority of his rank he is like the God of all. For there is nothing upon earth more exalted than he. Since he is a mortal, he must not vaunt himself; since he is a god he must not give way to anger. For if he is honored as being an image of God, yet he is at the same time fashioned from the dust of the earth, from which he should learn simplicity to all.

Here Philo, as often in speaking of the Patriarchs, uses the word god in the double sense so common in paganism. On the one hand it could refer to the One

God who, most thoughtful pagans believed, was the ultimate Being. On the other it could be used as we use the term superhuman being. The pagans understood this usage very well, as Philo shows here that he did, and when they talked of the divinity of the king they meant simply that he was superhuman. No educated pagan ever dreamed that in calling the king a god he was identifying him with the One God Almighty. Philo, let me repeat, shows in this passage that he understood this very well. If he recalls sharply the material body of the king, he is doing only the very thing which his pagan sources did. Why, then, did he risk his life and that of his people rather than join the rest of the world in what all considered a formal gesture, the dropping of a pinch of incense on the emperor's altar? The question is of the greatest importance because not only was the fate of the Jewish people at stake: the young Christian movement was to be wracked with torture for the same distinction.

In discussing the matter in more detail I have suggested three possible explanations of why Philo, and with him Jews and later Christians, stopped at this peculiar point in the current attitude toward the king.

First there was the real, if irrational, feeling, with Jews as later with Christians, that a dead saint is more holy than a living one, and hence that after death he can be recognized as "more divine" in a way impossible during his life. The term "divine sage" of pagan speculation was likewise applied, if to any in-

dividual at all, to men safely removed by centuries from curious scrutiny. So Philo might well have talked about Abraham and Moses in language which he had to contradict for his contemporaries. This is a consideration which may have affected his attitude toward the emperor, but other considerations seem to me more important.

Secondly, Philo's deepest religious instincts were involved in this refusal to put Gaius, or even Augustus, really on a level with the Jewish Patriarchs. To do so would have been to abandon the last stronghold of Jewish religious particularism. If terms used for Moses and his law could be applied to any Roman emperor, the unique value of Judaism would have been gone, and the *raison d'être* of the distinctive people with it. Not monotheism, but religious Judaism must have perished with such a concession.

With this went, thirdly, an equally important motive in the refusal, the instinct of Jewish patriotism. How much Philo resented being subject to Roman conquerors has clearly appeared. In the allegories of Joseph for the inner circle of his own people there is a venom which shows that the suicidal patriotism of the Jews of his day burned in Philo no less hotly because its light was kept skillfully hid from Roman eyes. How could such a patriotism be expected to reason so logically that it was ready to admit that a gentile autocrat over Jewish liberties shared in divine nature? That Roman rule could be recognized as a divine dispensation to discipline the faithful for a time was entirely possible, and Philo and his friends intended to

start no armed revolt. But death itself was better than admitting that these rulers, like Moses, had the “greater share of divine nature” which made them saviors of the human race. Jews could take many hellenistic ideas into their religion, but not divine kings when they were Greeks or Romans who ruled over the Jews by force.

It was not monotheism which was the issue, clearly, and I can think of no other motive than this politico-religious one as the reason why Jews stopped at this point in their hellenization. Nor can I believe that the issue was the Jewish detestation of images. The Jew was not asked, be it remembered, to go into pagan temples to venerate the emperor’s statue with pagan rites. He was asked to put the image into his own synagogues, and show respect to it in his own fashion. Discovery of Jewish art has recently taught us that no more than a century after Philo’s time, and perhaps before him, hellenized Jews were making the freest use of pagan images in their catacombs and synagogues. We are even told in the Talmud¹⁴ that rabbis of the late first and early second centuries put various images, including those of Greeks (what Greeks could they thus honor but Greek gods?), upon their sacred mazzoth. Again if Jews could put images of Nike, Demeter, Tyche, Helios, Orpheus, and Ares in their synagogues, why not an image of the emperor, unless it was precisely the emperor whom they did not wish fully to recognize? That is, in another aspect of their hellenization the Jews have again stopped short, logic or no logic, at precisely the same

point. And again we must conclude that it was not the use of images any more than it was the idea of divinity in humanity which they refused to accept, but the Roman emperor as the realization of the kingly ideal for Jews. Indeed, the very fact that they completely accepted the pagan theory of kingship made their rejection of Roman imperial divinity all the more necessary. For if God could give to man his true royal representation from gentile stock, Judaism as a religion and a people alike had become meaningless. The Jew of that feverish day could, in the long run, take anything else from the gentiles, even death, but not this.

The power of an idea to survive is not determined by its logical origins. Christianity, which regarded itself as the true or completed Judaism, carried over from Judaism both the idea of the saving power of divinity in humanity and the prejudice against associating this idea with the Roman emperor. To say nothing of the blending of humanity and divinity in Jesus Christ, the Christian veneration of the Virgin, and soon of the great company of saints, belied their political logic in which humanity and divinity were still kept in sharp contrast. Similarly Christians could use images, but not images of the emperor. Christians followed hellenized Jews in regarding "the powers that be," however malevolent, as "ordained by God," and they had no inclination, when the empire became Christian, to modify the pagan theory of kingship otherwise than to discard such statements of the emperor's relation to God as would imply an emperor

cult. For the traditional distinction was so fundamental a part of the Christian heritage from Judaism that Christians insisted, when they came into power, upon changing the formula of "divine nature" to "divine right," in order that the "divinity that doth hedge a king" might never imply such veneration as was given to images of the Virgin and the saints.

What it is interesting to see is that the arbitrary logic of Christianity, which accepted ancient theories of the king on every point except that of the king's personal divinity, was itself a part of the Christian heritage from Judaism. When Philo refused to concede any measure of divinity to the Roman emperor which would imply veneration, and led his friends to Rome to try to get his attitude sanctioned by Gaius, it little appeared that the successors of this group in Christianity would ultimately be victorious, and force the distinction upon the empire, so that monarchy for the next fifteen hundred years would keep the kingly ideal of the ancients, but keep also the modification which the group feeling of hellenized Jews had required.

NOTES—CHAPTER III

1. See my *Jurisprudence*, 47 f., 245.

2. From *Som.*, ii, 81–92.

3. *The Politics of Philo Judæus, Practice and Theory*. New Haven, 1938.

4. This will be found in Chap. II of my *Philo's Politics*.

5. For details of this treatment of Joseph, see *Philo's Politics*, Chap. III.

6. I have developed this problem in detail in *Philo's Politics*, Chap. IV.

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7. *Jos.*, 28–31.
8. *Decal.*, 2 ff.
9. *Immut.*, 173–176.
10. I have elaborated this in *Philo's Politics*, Chap. V.
11. *QE*, ii, 105; Harris, *Fragments*, 68. I cannot understand why I so badly mistranslated the statement in *Philo's Politics*, 97.
12. See my *Philo's Politics*, 115–119.
13. Fragment from Antonius, *Ser.*, civ; Mangey, II, 673.
14. J. D. Eisenstein, "Mazzah," *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, VIII, 394.

CHAPTER IV

THE JEW

THE problem of Philo's relation to Judaism is not an easy one. As has been seen already, Philo claimed in the name of Judaism everything which he took from the gentiles. The king theory, he assumed, was Jewish; the metaphysic of Plato, the numbers of the Pythagoreans, the cosmology of Greek science, the mysticism, ethics, and psychology of the hellenistic world, all this was, he says, nothing which he as a Jew took from the outside but something which the Greeks had taken from Moses. Even Greek and Roman law realized, he thought, its highest expression in Jewish legislation. It is obvious, then, that Philo's own remarks about the nature and meaning of Judaism are no literal guide to what Philo actually drew from a Judaism unaffected by Hellenism. There is good reason to think that much of Philo's Greek heritage came to him already assimilated by Jews, and that he did not himself borrow all the mass of hellenistic ideas *de novo*. They may have really become a part of his traditional Judaism. But to say this only puts the question back upon Philo's predecessors, the question of evaluating the contribution of Jewish thought in the final mixture Philo presents. Even on the assumption that Philo's point of view had long been that of Jews in Alexandria and in other centers in the Græco-Roman world, we still must look

to Philo to find what was properly Jewish in such a tradition, since that tradition, if, as I believe, it did exist, must be reconstructed largely from him.

One chief difficulty in such reconstruction is the vagueness of what we mean by Judaism as a generic term in Philo's day apart from hellenistic influence. Hellenism is sufficiently hard to define, but Judaism even more so. We know too much and too little about Judaism in this period to isolate definite criteria. The Judaism of the Baruch and Enoch traditions was very different from the Judaism of either the Pharisees or the Sadducees. For years before Philo the legalists, the prophets, and the apocalypticists had each a distinct conception of the Jewish religion and its basic elements and objectives. Further, as Heinemann saw when dealing with problems of law, many Jewish traditions had parallel developments within Hellenism. The central doctrine of Judaism, monotheism, for example, was the great contribution to Jews from the prophets, who made the tribal God into the one God of all men and the universe. But Greek thought had, at about the same time, been going in the same direction, though, as we shall see, by a different road.

Völker thought that because Philo spoke so much of virtue, and sometimes identified virtue with the avoidance of both voluntary and involuntary offenses, his ethics were basically Jewish. But Philo had certainly read the Greek writings carefully, and knew that Greek ethical teaching was concerned with virtue in precisely the way Philo himself usually described it. If Jewish thought centered in conduct, so did the

speculation of all hellenistic schools: mysticism and ethics had entirely displaced the metaphysical rationalism of Plato and Aristotle, though even they can hardly be said to have been uninterested in ethics. The difference between the Greek-Philonic and the Jewish notions of virtue has been clearly, if inadequately, pointed out by G. F. Moore.¹

By such details we shall not come to understand Philo's relation to Judaism. To begin with details, such as the verbal similarity of the Logos and the Jewish Memra, is quite hopeless. This matter has once for all been settled by Moore² and, by implication, by Finkelstein.³ The Logos has no essential counterpart with anything in Jewish writings not influenced by Hellenism, in spite of the fact that Philo himself roots the conception so deeply in the Scriptures.⁴

Philo's Judaism must be approached from much more general considerations than these. What is a Jew? Superficially he is the son of Jewish parents dedicated by them through the rite of circumcision. By this superficial test Philo of course qualified. More deeply, a Jew is, and was, one who was loyal to the Jewish people (Philo called it the "race," but this word is now spoiled), and expresses his loyalty in an attempt to perpetuate the Jewish tradition. So far, I think, there will be agreement in describing the generic word "Jew," but no farther. Judaism has always been divided, was even divided among its leaders within a single branch of Judaism in Philo's day, on one central issue: is the tradition a growing, adapt-

able thing, whose spirit can be isolated from details as one generation or civilization succeeds another, or is it something once for all given, and beyond criticism or adaptation? As over against the Sadducees, the Pharisees, the early rabbis of Talmudic tradition, were the party of reformed Judaism, adapting the old ways and laws to new conditions. But this adaptation remained Jewish instead of becoming as with other people a process of assimilation, because it insisted upon keeping Judaism and the Jewish people distinct and separate from gentiles. Mere loyalty to the group would not do this, essential as such loyalty was. The basis of differentiation had to be a distinct group of customs, ways of living. Only so long as the Jews continued to live differently from other people could they remain a distinct entity. The gypsies have for centuries preserved their distinctiveness precisely in this way, and a few groups like the Mennonites in America have likewise kept their integrity by clinging to customs unlike those of their neighbors. To a lesser degree the religious loyalties and practices of Catholics make them a people distinct in American society. As soon as "reform" and adaptation in Judaism mean the abandonment of the peculiar practices of Jewish life, loyalty to the group is bound to weaken, and the continued existence of the Jewish people is certain to be threatened. A Jew or a Catholic may learn modern mathematics, medicine, and painting, but if the one discards the festivals and does not circumcise his sons, and the other neglects Mass, both cease to be propagators of the group.

From this point of view Philo was a Jew of the Jews. He left his early monastic isolation to help them. His journey to Rome as an old man marks him as one of the great Jewish "confessors," who escaped martyrdom only through the indifference of the Roman officials. What was at that time the highest symbol of Jewish differentiation, the freedom of the temple from any taint of pagan worship, was to be violated by the erection of a statue of Gaius, as Jupiter, in the very holy of holies. This, Philo realized, would be a destruction of the temple more complete than its being torn down. The next step was inevitable: "for in the destruction of the temple there is reason to fear that Gaius will also order that the general name of our whole nation be abolished." The lesser will collapse with the greater. And what is to be hoped from protest? Under the circumstances, nothing but death. "Be it so; we will perish. For indeed a glorious death in defence of our laws is a kind of life. . . . All human considerations are discarded: let them go. But let the hope in God the Savior, who has often saved the People from misfortunes and evils, abide unquenchable in our souls."⁵ And true to their mission, the men Philo was leading stayed on and on, trying to dissuade the emperor from his attack on the Jewish customs.

This, it can be said without question, is the basic spirit of Judaism, what has kept it intact through the centuries. However much Philo may have enriched the meaning of the laws and customs with Greek metaphysic, science, and ethics, ideas for him could

not take the place of active observance. A modern Jew may defend circumcision for its sanitary value, but, if he is a loyal Jew, his son will be circumcised by a rabbi (or possibly a surgeon) with the traditional ritual; it will not be an ordinary surgical operation as it is with gentiles, though from the point of view of sanitation the ritual adds nothing. From the point of view of Judaism, it is the ritual, not the sanitation, which is decisive. For Philo the same problem existed, but in a different form. The best minds about him were interested not in science in our sense, but in ethics and mysticism. These he claimed for Moses as modern Jews claim that Moses knew the danger of trichinosis from pork. But again as the modern Jew betrays his Judaism when he takes the gentile solution, being careful that pork is well cooked before eating, so there was danger that the ethical and mystical principles of the Greeks, which hellenized Jews saw illustrated in their laws, should take the place of the often inconvenient laws themselves. In a frequently quoted passage Philo says:

There are some who, understanding the letter of the laws to be a symbol of intellectual things, are very particular about the latter but readily neglect the former. I, for my part, should blame such for unscrupulousness ; for it is necessary to attend to both, the exact investigation of the things not manifest [that is, the ethical and mystical principles evolved from the Torah by allegory], and the uninterrupted preservation of the manifest [that is, the literal observance of the law as law]. But now, as though living in a desert alone by them-

selves, or as having become bodiless souls, and knowing neither city nor village nor family, no association of men of any kind, looking contemptuously upon the opinions of the many, they explore the naked truth itself by itself. The sacred word teaches that such men have conceived an excellent idea [that is, the higher meaning is really in the Torah]; but at the same time not to relax aught of what is found in the customs which inspired men, better than those of our time, have ordained.⁶

How widespread was this “reformed” movement in Philo’s day we have no way of knowing. It was soon, in Paul, to have a leader of great consequence, and Philo was quite right in seeing that any “reformed” Judaism, which gave the individual freedom to select among the laws to be observed, struck at the very foundations of Jewish continuity. I cannot believe the Christian tradition that he, any more than Rabbi Akiba, could have been converted to Christianity. But if the book of Acts is to be credited, the synagogues in which Paul preached were fertile ground for the doctrine of emancipation from Jewish law, however much Jewish leaders of the synagogues may have fought it. There must have been many Jews of the sort which Philo rebuked. The important fact here is that Philo did denounce them, and that, for all his Greek ideology, he was a fundamental Jew on the basic point of Judaism, the actual observance of the Jewish way of life defined in the Law.

Just as Philo was an observant Jew, so he was one who agreed with Jewish tradition fully, for all his syncretism, about the sin of polytheism. But mono-

theism to Philo did not mean the belief that above man there was only one higher order of being, the One God. It is dubious if it meant that to any writer of the Old Testament. The point of Jewish monotheism in the ancient world was not the refusal to recognize that the sun and stars, for example, are animate beings of an order far superior to man: the strict Jew was distinctive in the East because, thinking such superhuman entities to be servants and helpers of God, he refused them any rites or cultus, and addressed his prayers only to the supreme principle behind them. The strict Jew was not unique in supposing that the ultimate principle was one. This statement cannot often enough be repeated. The Greek pantheon had become transcended by a single divine principle, to the point that the various gods seemed to be only personalizations of different aspects of divine rule. Ancient Egyptian thought seems to me to have long before experienced the same transformation. Behind the Egyptian god who was the physical sun was the supreme divine power of which the physical sun was only the visible type, and if there was still mythology in the highest realm, it was mythology of the sort which made the sacred trinity, father, mother, and son, into a unity by insisting that the son had begot himself by his own mother—that is making father, mother, and son relationship over into a rich description of the single divine power. And, to complicate distinctions, in Philo's day when the hellenistic development toward monotheism was robbing the gods of any personal reality, a tendency had arisen in

Judaism to surround God with angels who were often more definitely personal than were the gods of Greece and Egypt for thoughtful Greeks.⁷

Philo was himself fully aware of the universal tendency in paganism toward the doctrine of a single supreme deity. In one place he says: "But if he exists whom with one accord all Greeks and barbarians acknowledge together, the supreme Father of gods and men and the Maker of the whole universe, whose nature is invisible and hard to grasp not only by the eye but even by the mind. . . ."⁸ Colson in his note on this passage cannot believe his eyes that Philo thus ascribes monotheism to all pagans. So far as I can see Philo was telling the simple truth about paganism as he saw it, not as Christian propaganda has ever since misrepresented it. And he was just as well aware that the approach to this monotheism had been by the reduction of individual deities to aspects of the single divine power. So he does not oppose the gods or the polytheistic poetry of the Greeks even as strongly as, at times, did Plato himself, for Philo was willing to accept both gods and poetry as the intelligent people of his day, especially the Stoics, were doing, turning them, like the Scriptures, into allegories of higher principles. He says that if you read the poets understanding that Vulcan means fire, Juno air, Mercury reason or the Logos, "then you who are an accuser will become one who praises the poets as people who celebrate divinity with praises truly and properly."⁹

Obviously Philo does not think that the Jew is unique in the ancient world by reason of his doctrine

of monotheism. The Jewish contribution was the belief that only the supreme God might be worshiped. There is every reason for supposing that all through the ages many if not most ordinary Jews had themselves worshiped the lesser and more accessible deities of their neighbors: the prophets are a continual protest to try to recall the people to the worship of the One, and however we may have tended to think of Judaism as a whole in terms of the ideals of the prophets, they themselves felt very much apart in thinking and preaching as they did. By Philo's time to all appearances the issue was settled, and all Jews but apostates recognized that they should do obedience only to the Father of heaven and earth.

This was the attitude of the strictest Judaism, the official position. There is, however, considerable evidence that Jews prayed not only to God but to the angels. The angel of Abraham is addressed in prayer by Joseph in *The Testament of Joseph* (c. 6), a similar prayer is in *The Testament of Dan* (6, 2); and in the Jewish prayers for revenge found in Rhenea, God and the angels are invoked.¹⁰ Philo likewise prayed to Moses.¹¹ Yet Jews never admitted the inconsistency of such prayers with their general position. Still monotheism meant to them the belief in a single ultimate deity, and did not exclude belief in the existence of other superhuman beings beside God. The Jew clung to his general criterion: whatever other superhuman beings there might be, the One God could alone be worshiped.

In this again Philo was a thorough Jew. He dis-

cusses monotheism most directly when in the treatises *On the Decalogue* (52–65) and *The Special Laws* (i, 13–65) he deals with the First Commandment. The argument in both is quite similar. The large part of mankind, he says, has the delusion that the four elements, the sun, moon, planets, the heaven itself, or the universe as a whole, are gods with absolute power.¹² Different names have been given these in different mythologies, but the basic error is the same. The simple fact is that, as Philo says, “all the gods which sense descries in heaven must not be supposed to possess *absolute power*, but to have received the rank of subordinate rulers, subject by their natures to correction, though on account of their fine virtue not actually experiencing it.”¹³ Therefore, Philo goes on to conclude, it is the greatest impiety to give to lesser and created beings the worship which is due the eternal Creator. The point is not the existence of other beings, whom Philo is willing here and elsewhere to call “gods,” but the fact that worship is due only to “absolute power.” This word, *αὐτοκράτεια*, our word “autocratic power,” means self-originating power. The power of all created beings, including even that of the universe, is not self-originating, but is derivative from the One. Only God has power of his own right and nature. Where Plato and Aristotle, for example, or later the Catholic Church, would agree entirely with Philo’s idea that self-originating power is single, they would not dream of saying that all forms whatever of prayer or cultus should be offered to God the Father alone. The statement of Philo shows us

Judaism in its most essential position, not denying the existence of the lesser gods, but denying that they should be worshiped.¹⁴

Philo concluded as follows the sentence whose beginning has already been quoted: "But if he exists whom with one accord all Greeks and barbarians acknowledge together, the supreme Father of gods and men and the Maker of the whole universe, whose nature is invisible and hard to grasp not only by the eye but even by the mind . . . then all men should have cleaved to him and not have introduced more gods as by stage machinery to receive the same honors."¹⁵ The crux was not the existence of "gods," but the blasphemy of giving worship to lower superhuman beings.

When it came to the forms of worship used by the gentiles for their deities, Philo, like the best Jewish tradition, was most outspoken and bitter. Especially for the use of cult images, for the sanctification of certain animals after the Egyptian manner, Philo has nothing but scorn. He relentlessly drives his logic on this point.¹⁶ Since it is the originating power that we worship, then we ought to worship the artists and sculptors rather than their images, or even the hammers or brushes with which they worked. That Philo was misrepresenting pagan cultus he ought himself to have been fully aware. The intelligent pagan no more worshiped a statue of Isis than does an intelligent Catholic worship, say, a picture of the Bleeding Heart, nor an intelligent Jew worship the sacred scroll of the Torah. All three treat their cult objects

with great respect, and would defend them from profanation with their very lives; each of the three prefers to make his devotions to God before the object sacred to his own faith. But for the Jew to say that the Catholic or pagan worships the image is just as unfair as for the Catholic or pagan to say that the Jew, because the scroll is before him in the synagogue as he prays, is praying to the scroll. Philo had so much understanding of the pagan world that he should have known this thoroughly. He should have known that the perversions of paganism by the illiterate horde which made a god of the statue itself were no more truly the teaching of Isis than do the ignorant misunderstandings of any religion represent that religion in truth. Yet precisely such a misrepresentation of paganism was an important part of Jewish apology and propaganda, and Philo the Jew sets it forth in the most striking language. This could have come only from his profound loyalty to Judaism. He had been brought up like all orthodox Jews in the Jewish sense of religious superiority, the sense that the Jews alone knew how to worship God in an acceptable manner. And all his later understanding of paganism never affected this pride of true worship, or his refusal to understand the meaning of pagan cult symbolism. To accuse Philo of deliberate misrepresentation of paganism is perhaps unfair, but the only alternative is to ascribe to him such Jewish loyalty as blinded his eyes and mind to what must have been plain facts before him. Christianity continued the Jewish slanders against pagan religious

life, to the point that still one who sees any good in pagan religions is accused of anti-Christian bias. This is a large subject. It need only be said here that on this point again Philo remained a typical Jew.

With his hatred of idolatry went a hatred of the secret initiations and rites of the Mystery Religions. These religions Philo mentions only rarely, but always with the utmost scorn, and says that none of the followers of Moses may be initiated into them.¹⁷

Philo's rejection of heathenism and his loyalty to the Jewish God, however, did not take only this negative form. The abiding appeal of Judaism, and the greatest gift of Judaism to Christianity, was its doctrine of God the Father who is not only the Father Creator, as with the Greeks, but the loving protector and helper of his children. Far as Philo went in accepting the abstract Pure Being of the Greek philosophic deity, he never lost the personal and merciful God of the Jews. The two are logically strange company, but appear in constant juxtaposition. For example, when Philo is discussing the appeal of the daughters of Zelophehad to Moses, Philo says of God:

And he, the Maker of all, the Father of the world, who holds firmly knit together heaven and earth and water and air and all that each produces, the Ruler of men and gods, did not disdain to give response to the petition of some orphan girls. And with that response he gave something more than a judge would give, so kind and gracious was he, who has filled the universe through and through with his beneficent power; for he stated his full approval of the maidens. O Master, how can one

hymn thee? . . . Mark how the persons who seem thus lonely and unfortunate are not treated as nothing worth and negligible in the sight of God, of whose empire the least honored parts are the kingdoms found everywhere in the civilized world; for even the whole compass of the round earth is but the outermost fringe of his works. Mark this, I say, and learn its much-needed lesson.¹⁸

Again, after Philo has described the absolute God from whom radiate the mystic Powers, he goes on:

Yet vast as are his Excellences and Powers, he takes pity and compassion on those most helplessly in need, and does not disdain to give judgment to strangers or orphans or widows. He holds their low estate worthy of his providential care, while of kings and despots and great potentates he takes no account.¹⁹

In the highly abstract and philosophical treatise *On the Creation of the World* there still appears the Jewish God who loves man and mercifully provides for his needs like a father for his children.²⁰ So common is this note in Philo that over and again "the loving kindness of the great and bountiful God" appears in even the most metaphysical passages.²¹

Völker²² has a fine collection of Philonic passages in which God the merciful and giver of good to men is spoken of and addressed in purely personal terms, and he is entirely right in saying that these passages are as like Jewish as they are unlike Greek philosophical piety. He admits fully the presence of Greek philosophical descriptions of deity, but disagrees sharply with those who wish to leave the matter by

describing Philo's God either as truly a double entity, Jewish and Greek, or as basically Greek. To him the Greek element is essentially unimportant. "Philo feels first of all as a Jew." I cannot alter my original position that both the Greek and the Jewish were essential to him, and cannot see how anyone brought up in Christian tradition should see any difficulty in the double conception. We have passed freely back and forth between the Father of Jesus of Nazareth, the Father of the Prodigal Son, and the abstract presentations of God in creed and theology, especially we who have had theological training, until it would be impossible for us ourselves to choose one "essential" deity between the two. When we make the choice for Philo we are doing what I warned against at the outset, forcing modern problems upon him and asking him to speak our language. He felt no contradiction between the two. True he does come nearer to calling the mystical apprehension the "higher" apprehension than he does the Jewish, and he would lead the Jews of the inner circle into increasing apprehension of the abstract Being of God. But the fact was that as a Jew and man of everyday experience he needed the personal loving God, and as a thinker and mystic he needed the other. He did not give up one for the other, and apparently had no notion of their incompatibility. He would have been highly anachronistic had he done so. The whole question of "personality" in God had not been raised by either Jew or Greek, and it never entered Philo's head to raise it. The matter had reached only the stage of questioning "an-

thropomorphism," and here Philo stands firmly with the Greek philosophers, to the point of saying that the anthropomorphic passages in the Bible are nonsense if taken literally. Since the question of personality had not been raised, Philo does not, like the scholastics and modern theologians, carry the divine personality from Judaism into the abstract Being of the Ultimate. The Jewish God is personal to him, but he discusses the philosophic deity with no implications of personality. Both were essential to him, the Jewish God for the man of everyday life, the abstract God for the mystic and philosopher. Let that man who has no such divided personality cast the first stone at Philo for his dualism. It will be a stone feebly thrown, for life cannot be strongly lived, as Philo lived it, in a monistic hothouse.²³

Philo's loyalty to the Jewish people is an aspect of his Judaism which has already appeared clearly enough in the account of his political activity for the Jews. His devotion obviously went on typically to the Messianic dream, little as he has discussed it. Over and again through the treatises he is justifying the solidarity of Jews by allegories whose bizarre expression does not conceal the loyalty behind them. If Philo expressed his mystical longing in a desire to come as near as possible to a vision of God, then the very name Israel by which all Jews are named means "the man or people who see God." He called the Jews "the people most beloved by God, the one which seems to me to have received the gift of priesthood and prophecy for every race of men."²⁴ "The Jewish

people is to the whole inhabited world what the priest is to the state.”²⁵ Indeed it is the final test of Philo's Jewish loyalty that, however dualistic he may actually have been, the whole labor of his literary life was prompted by Jewish loyalty. He insisted always and on every occasion that the Jewish Scriptures taught Greek mysticism in a perfect way which the Greeks themselves never approximated. To show this he had to do some amazing things with the scriptural texts. But he refused to believe that anything so sublime as Greek philosophy and mysticism could have been unsuspected by Moses and the Patriarchs.

Philo's Judaism in the sense of his loyalty to the Jewish God, law, and people, his scornful refusal to sully his religion with any intermixture of pagan religious rites, is absolutely essential to bear in mind if we are to understand the man and his motivations. His relation to the more technical aspects of Judaism, to one party or another, is quite a different problem. If Finkelstein's division of Jews of the day into patrician and plebeian, landed aristocracy and city people, is to stand for the rest of Judaism, Philo's place is going to be difficult to find. He was at once a city man and an aristocrat. What, if any, are the relations of his legal interpretations to one or another halachic tradition among the rabbis is still an open question, and one which, as I have said, is beyond my competence. From the traditional description of Sadducees I have thought him closer to them than to the Pharisees, but that was a suggestion which many rabbinists have not received with favor.

While specialists are debating this matter, we may well continue trying to understand Philo himself from his own writings. And as our acquaintance with Judaism is broader and more detailed, we shall see Judaism in more and more places. For example I have in general presented the mystic side of Philo in terms of Greek or hellenistic conceptions, and that seems to me still to be right. That Philo was making the Greek idea over into something Jewish was perfectly obvious, but one detail in that connection has not hitherto been pointed out. As we have seen, and shall see in greater detail in a later chapter, Philo thought that the Patriarchs were mystic saviors of the Jewish people by their having gone from matter to the immaterial, and so having opened up the way for which hellenistic religions and mystic philosophies were, it seemed to him, vainly looking. The kind of salvation offered, the descriptions of the character and achievements of the Patriarchs, these are quite foreign to any Judaism of which I have heard, and entirely at home in Greek thought. But the idea that the Jewish people was to be saved, and had special access to God, because of the personal merits of Abraham, Moses, and the others, was just as common a Jewish notion as the other was foreign to Judaism. It had a special term in Jewish tradition, *zekut abot*, usually translated "merits of the fathers,"²⁶ and was behind the Jewish prayers to the "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." It was the merit of these and of Moses by virtue of which Israel was the chosen race, and what prayers God would not answer when even

Moses asked him directly he readily granted, the rabbis pointed out, when Moses asked in the name of the three great Patriarchs. Those three were not dead but living, and heaven was often described as a return to their bosoms. Even Jesus shared this notion of heaven.²⁷ With this belongs the protection given Joseph by the angel of Abraham and Joseph's prayer to the angel in *The Testament of Joseph* to which allusion has already been made. So in making the salvation of the Jewish Mystery a gift from the Patriarchs to the Jews, something available only to Jews and the proselytes whom he considered immigrants from their own people into the Jewish people, Philo has betrayed again his ineradicable Judaism. The Greek religious tendency was toward internationalism and universalism. In rejecting this and keeping the mystic salvation as a description of the Merits of the Fathers Philo demonstrated one of the basic contrasts between his hellenization and that of Christianity which early discarded all distinction between Jew and Greek.

The point is that Philo is full of such Judaistic points of view. The deeper one goes into his writings, the more inextricably mixed Hellenism and Judaism appear. As one who has approached Philo more from the Greek than the Jewish point of view, I have, let it be freely admitted, hitherto stressed the Greek more than the Jewish, though his Judaism has by no means been neglected. I have allowed myself to do so because I have always frankly written as a gentile scholar, and have never felt able to attempt a rounded

picture of Philo in any of my writings. In this little presentation in the round the Jewish side must be emphasized as I have never had occasion to do before. But again let me give warning. The true Judaism of Philo is so shot through with just as true and genuine hellenistic conceptions and ideals that it is not for the beginner to try to separate them too early. And, at the last, however much we may temporarily have to separate the two for the purpose of clarification and analysis, we cannot leave them apart, or we shall present only Philo's spiritual anatomy, not the living person in whom the two were a triumphant unit.

NOTES—CHAPTER IV

1. *Judaism*, II, 81–83.
2. *Ibid.*, I, 416–419.
3. Louis Finkelstein, *The Pharisees* (Philadelphia, 1938), I, 161 f.
4. The Metatron of post-Philonic rabbinic tradition I cannot take seriously as an indigenous product of Judaism, when, apart from the peculiar nature of the conception, even the name is in Hebrew a loan word from the Greek. So far as I know it cannot be demonstrated that such a notion was ever suggested in rabbinical circles in Philo's time.
5. See *Legat.*, 184–196.
6. *Migr.*, 89 f., as translated by G. F. Moore, *Judaism*, II, 9. See *By Light, Light*, 83, 90, 236.
7. G. F. Moore, *Judaism*, I, 223 f., says quite accurately that Philo had the conceptions both of the immateriality of God, and of monotheism as a doctrine of the unity of God in the metaphysical sense, "from Plato, and reads them into the Bible with the rest of his philosophy; but he did not get them from the Bible or from Judaism at all." Cf. *ibid.*, 361.
8. *Spec.*, ii, 165.
9. *Provid.*, ii, 41.
10. For this see A. Deissmann in *Philologus*, LXI (1902), 252–265, and *Licht vom Osten* (1923), 351 ff. Cf. M. Gaster, *Studies*

and Texts, II (1925–28), 733 ff.; Dittenberger, *Syll. Inscr. Gr.*, 3d ed., III (1920), 337 f., no. 1181. From M. Braun, *History and Romance in Graeco-Oriental Literature* (Oxford, 1938), 64, n. 3.

11. See below, p. 198.
12. *Spec.*, i, 13; *Decal.*, 53.
13. *Spec.*, i, 19.
14. See also *Spec.*, ii, 255–256.
15. *Spec.*, ii, 165.
16. *Decal.*, 66–81.
17. *Spec.*, i, 319 ff.; iii, 40.
18. *Mos.*, ii, 238–241 abridged.
19. *Spec.*, i, 308; cf. ii, 176–182. Philo takes the “strangers,” in Greek, “proselytes,” in both passages to mean converts from paganism to Judaism.
20. *Opif.*, 81, 171. See above, p. 44.
21. See for example *Cherub.*, 29; *Abr.*, 137; *LA*, i, 34, etc. It is illuminating to take the passages indicated in Leisegang’s *Index*, 368, 369, under the attributes of God: ὑλεως, φιλάνθρωπος, φιλόδωρος, σωτήρ, and others.
22. *Fortschritt*, 50–54.
23. Völker, *Fortschritt*, 54–58, has a very interesting review of various interpretations of this dualism. To his remarks about my position in *By Light, Light*, I would answer that there I was attempting to present only the mystical Philo, not the whole man.
24. *Abr.*, 98.
25. *Spec.*, ii, 163–167.
26. See G. F. Moore, *Judaism*, I, 536–545; III, 164, n. 249.
27. W. Bousset-H. Gressmann, *Die Religion des Judentums* (1926), 361 f. Finkelstein discusses the doctrine for its bearings on determinism, *The Pharisees* (1938), I, 255 ff.

CHAPTER V

THE PHILOSOPHER: METAPHYSICS

PHILO had been brought up in Alexandria and given the best education which that brilliant city had to offer. With Greek as his native language he had early poured into his soul the treasures of Greek literature; Homer, the tragedians, the poets, the historians, the philosophers, all had been devoured and accepted as quick and receptive minds have always claimed for their own whatever is beautiful and true. Problems, vistas had opened for him which the uneducated peasant or tradesman of Palestine never suspected. He has always been called Philo Alexandrinus interchangeably with Philo Judæus, and in his case Alexandrinus was not merely a place name: he was an Alexandrian as thoroughly and deeply as he was a Jew. There had been others before him, apparently for at least two centuries, who had similarly been both Jews and Alexandrians, and who had tried to combine the two cultures. With the early crude attempts by which it would be stated that Moses was Osiris or Musæus we need not here be concerned. For Philo, and perhaps for many of his predecessors and contemporaries, there was no longer a conflict in ideology, serious as the conflict might still be in matters of conduct and social relations of Jews and gentiles. Judaism, it must be recalled, gave him

no science, no metaphysic, no theory of ethics. That there was a single supreme God who had created and now ruled all men in justice, and had in mercy told the Jews what to do and how to worship if they would please him, was a long step from the Greek theories of psychology, of the nature of reality, and of the basic principles of virtue. Philo heard Socrates, as young men still should do, asking those eternal questions: What do you know? What do you mean by the terms love, beauty, virtue, justice, piety? Your words are beautiful, but to what do they correspond? To these questions Judaism had no replies, and Philo was bound to follow the answers of the Greek philosophers who now for four hundred years had been wrestling with the questions. Not that the Greek answers were final or even in agreement with each other. There were the Cynic and Sceptic refusals to consider such questions, and the popular Epicurean pretexts for living by and for momentary gratification of desires. The people of the ancient world must not be idealized: in every period the thoughtful and controlled are in the minority. But Philo was a Jew who, like the best Jews of all time, accepted the best rather than the worst from his gentile neighbors.

In determining what Philo took from Greek philosophy we are desperately hampered at the outset by our almost complete ignorance of the philosophic atmosphere of Alexandria in his day. It is relatively easy to associate different phrases or terms as Philo uses them with similar phrases from the classical

writings of the various schools. But what we do not know is the way in which these phrases reached Philo. His philosophical vocabulary is notoriously eclectic; that is, it can be traced to a variety of sources, but his philosophical position is, in principle if not in details, quite consistent and homogeneous. Did his consistency originate with himself, or with his hellenistic Jewish predecessors, or was there a definite pagan school in Alexandria, itself already strongly eclectic, which he was largely following? What was taught by the Stoics with whom he actually talked? How far had they developed Posidonius' inclination to effect a harmony with Platonism? And what of the Platonic and Pythagorean schools of his day: we know that a hundred years after Philo's death Platonism at Alexandria had developed into the final school of Greek tradition, Neoplatonism; but was that the culmination of a movement which had already well begun by Philo's time? For answering any of these questions we have no adequate documents. There survive a number of fragments of Pythagoreanism which seem to have come from a considerable development of that school, but whether they represent Pythagorean thought of a century before Philo or two centuries later there is again no way definitely to establish. Stylistically the documents have been dated after Philo, but they are written in an artificial Greek, a late imitation of the South Italian Greek of the sixth and fifth centuries before Christ, and hence, lacking the decisive contemporary features of any later pe-

riod, they cannot be dated with any certainty. And if these documents were themselves composed after Philo, their contents may be traditional, and hence be quite the sort of doctrine taught by Pythagoreans in Philo's day. They become a particular problem in connection with Philo, for they seem closer to him on the whole than the fragments from any other school.

That is, we have to be very careful about method, again, when we discuss Philo's philosophic position. To align this detail or that with one school or another is of only preliminary importance. Phrases and terms, always the most important consideration in the history of philosophy, have to be watched with the closest scrutiny, or they mislead us as much as they can help us. Such a danger I have already pointed out elsewhere in connection with the phrase "Law of Nature."¹ Here is a phrase often used by the Stoics, and in view of the fact that Philo often uses the Stoic definition of law it is natural to suppose that Philo's "Law of Nature" was taken also from the Stoics. But when one looks deeper the matter is not at all so easy. The phrase, while it appears first as a technical term among the Stoics, was used by Plato² and expressed apparently a traditional idea among the Greeks. The Sophists had discredited the law of actual states by demonstrating that it was contrary to Nature. All their reasoning implied a major premise, which was not stated apparently because it was so familiar and axiomatic to all Greeks, that Nature is the true Law, and that not even the state can properly compel a

man to go against Nature and Natural Right. The Sophists justified the individual in asserting himself against his fellow citizens on the ground that to do so was to follow the higher Right of Nature rather than the lower law of cities. When the Sophists called this Nature, and the Stoics the Law of Nature, it is clear that both were talking of the same thing, though each thought differently about its connection with actual civil law, and to each the word Nature meant something different. The question with Philo, then, at once becomes more difficult. If all Greeks had for centuries taken Nature to be the ultimate Law, and had disagreed only on the character of ultimate Nature, and so of the Law therein implicit, there is little gained in noting that Philo and the Stoics both talk of the "Law of Nature": we have shown no essential dependence of Philo upon Stoic thought until we have seen whether each meant the same thing by Nature. As a matter of fact Philo's Nature is so unlike that of the Stoics that we can be deceived much more than illuminated by associating the two. The same warning applies to the Logos, which is almost always referred to as Stoic, and which seems to me essentially unlike anything in Stoicism except the term, which Stoics used for something different. And the same is true of many other terms in Philo.

The second warning should be against too rigid an adherence for Philo's sources to documents which can confidently be dated before him. Had we anything approaching an adequate record of hellenistic phi-

losophy this might be done. But, although we know that the various philosophical schools continued through the hellenistic age, we have not a single philosophical tractate complete between Aristotle and Philo himself, except the pseudo-Aristotelian *De Mundo*. If the history of hellenistic philosophy is ever adequately written, the place of Philo will be most important. For he was not an original philosopher at all, and anything philosophic to be found in his writings can confidently be taken as genuine teaching of his environment. His task was to show that the best of Greek philosophic teaching was derived from, and got its highest expression in, the Torah, and his whole objective would have been lost had he been inventing anything especially novel. If, as has often happened, a modern fundamentalist wishes to square Biblical teaching with modern science, his science may be inaccurate, but it will be as close to the teachings of actual scientists as he knows how to make it. Otherwise there will be no point in his vindication of its harmony with the Scriptures. Philo certainly knew his philosophy better than most modern fundamentalists know modern science, but his vindication of the thesis that Greek philosophy was the real meaning of Scripture would have had no point if the Greek philosophy he read into the Bible were not recognizable Greek philosophy. I do not see in Philo one who was at all recondite in philosophical studies. He knew the *Timæus*, and probably some other works of Plato. But except for the elaborate parallelism of the

Timaeus with Philo's treatise *On the Creation of the World* I can see few places where Philo was trying to work more than the general ideas and popular myths and terms of Plato into his exposition of the Bible. And his Stoic and Pythagorean elements are no more recondite than his Platonic. Always, it seems to me, we may assume that the philosophic elements in Philo were of the most obvious sort and taken from contemporary presentations, oral or written. If occasionally he brings in an echo of Heraclitus, as in the democracy of the Logos already mentioned,³ or in a peculiar doctrine of creation which I have discussed elsewhere,⁴ still I am convinced that Philo seems to us to be referring to obscure aspects of Greek tradition only because we have not the hellenistic ramifications of the earlier teachers.

As his philosophic ideas must be assumed to be contemporary commonplace because of his own lack of originality and his aim to make the "philosophy" of the Torah obvious to his readers, so Philo's background and meaning can often be illuminated from passages in philosophic treatises written long after his own death. Völker was shocked because I saw the original of some of Philo's remarks reflected in Proclus, who flourished in the fifth century after Christ.⁵ But it must be recalled that there is not a single pagan author who is remotely to be suspected of ever having read Philo.⁶ Clement and Origen and many others in Christian tradition undoubtedly used Philo with great admiration, but not one pagan of whom we

know. That Proclus got ideas from Philo we have no reason whatever for assuming. On the other hand we do know that the later Neoplatonists and Aristotelians had a vast philosophic literature from the hellenistic age on which they freely drew, since from them come most of our fragments of that period.⁷ Accordingly, when a passage in Philo is illuminated by a passage in a later pagan writing, an idea to which Philo only casually refers and which takes on meaning in the light of the later passage, the assumption must be that the later writer has drawn on a source, or preserved a conception, which was not only accessible in Philo's day, but was a commonplace to which he could make passing allusion.

It is for these reasons that I am convinced that, while Philo's contributions to philosophy seem to me to be negligible, the contribution he can make to the history of philosophy in the hellenistic period has not ever been exploited. To learn what Philo has to tell of hellenistic philosophy a most elaborate study will be necessary. First Philo's philosophic position on its main lines must be established from his own writings, and then the eclectic elements analyzed which are not in harmony with this position. Then not only the writings of his predecessors, but the great forest of writings for the next four or five centuries must be closely studied for parallels and amplifications of his ideas, with the assumption that ideas common to the later philosophers and Philo must be put back, at least in essence, into the hellenistic age. The work of

gathering this material, and of separating early core from later amplification, would be long, but I am convinced that at the end we should have a body of material on hellenistic philosophy which we do not now have at all. I am far from being a student of Proclus, for example, but I never read a few pages of Proclus without finding something which strikingly illuminates Philo, and which, since Philo was so unoriginal and so unknown to Proclus, must have been, in some form, current in hellenistic philosophy.

The preamble to a discussion of Philo's philosophy has been thus extended because, in spite of the amount which has been written on Philo and the philosophic schools, the main work seems to me still to be done. What I can say on the subject here must be not only abbreviated but quite tentative. It is to be hoped that someone interested in the history of philosophy may soon discover Philo and his importance for the subject.

Ancient philosophies, like modern philosophies, get their most important classifications from their conceptions of the nature of reality. The basic distinction for Philo is that between matter and the immaterial, for while he says little about matter directly, he everywhere assumes the complete disparity of the two. The immaterial alone has reality and being, and within the immaterial only God is real. That is, Philo begins and ends his thinking with pure Being. This Reality is described in Platonic terms which go beyond Plato in abstraction. God is, and nothing can be

said of deity except this. He, or It, is utterly self-contained and self-sufficient. Repeatedly Philo insists that God is not a σύγκριμα, but is φύσις ἀπλῆ;⁸ that is, he is of a single and uncompounded nature. He is not to be identified with the world: he is the mind of the universe, contains the universe, yet is in no sense contained by or within the universe. His most comparable material counterpart is the sun, shining eternally, self-contained, the source of light and life to all other existence. Yet God is not the sun, as he had not been the material sun in Egyptian philosophy, but is the “sun of the sun, the conceptual object behind the object comprehensible by sense.”⁹ Such a deity is comparable to Plato’s Idea of the Good if Good is read with the Aristotelian meaning: the ultimate and determining objective or goal, a meaning which I am sure the word had for Plato also. The Good in a moral sense Philo took to be a derivative from the pure existence and character of God, and so he called God “the one who is greater than the Good, antecedent to the Monad, purer than the One, impossible to see by another being, since he is apprehensible to himself alone.”¹⁰ But this should not be pressed into a contrast between Philo and Plato, for Philo frequently calls God the “Prime Good, the Perfect One, the unfailing Source of intelligence, justice, and every virtue.”¹¹ To say that God is the perfect Good, but is beyond the Good, is a paradox, but is not at all confusing, for the shift in the meaning of the term is quite obvious. God is beyond the Good in the sense that he

is beyond any of the particular aspects or conceptions of Good which we human beings must always have in mind when we use the term, since the ultimate source of that Good which we can understand must itself be utterly incomprehensible.¹²

A similar contradiction appears on many other points. For example, Philo says of the relation of God with space that it is utterly wrong to think that God is in space, since on the contrary it is God who contains the world;¹³ more abstractly the space which God represents contains the immaterial ideal world, not the material world;¹⁴ still more abstractly God is his own space and contains himself.¹⁵ Yet the universe is the material house of God.¹⁶ So with the Good, Philo has almost every gradation of expression. God is the ultimate moral Good as well as being beyond this Good. It all depends upon the mood, and how much the Jewish God is invading Philo's metaphysics at the time. When he says that God is not the cause of anything evil, but only of good things, since God is both the oldest of realities and himself the perfect Good,¹⁷ there is a real mixture of Plato with Jewish feeling. When he says that the storehouse of bad things is in us, of good things in God¹⁸ we are still farther from the metaphysical Good, and we come yet another step when he tells us that the cause of creation was the goodness and grace of God.¹⁹ We are now ready for a God who displays all the moral qualities which Jewish piety indicated.

If Philo's thinking is thus vacillating between reli-

gion and philosophy, between the Greek and Jewish ways of thinking, this must not confuse us to the point that his own philosophical position seems confused. As a philosopher, and as a mystic also, Philo quite consistently defends the absolute and self-contained deity. Ancient thought was divided chiefly on the issue whether God was an absolute immaterial Being, or was to be identified with the universe as a whole: on this point Philo never weakened. To identify the material universe with God, as the Stoics did, was to him not only one of the most shocking of impieties but also the most erroneous of metaphysical conceptions. And while as a Jew he could talk intimately of the goodness of God, which prompted God to create the world and men, he was driven by no less active a philosophic compulsion to construct or adopt an elaborate machinery through which God could be connected with the world, though as true Being God was ontologically distinct from it. Everywhere in Philo's writings appears this machinery of mediation, described with great imaginative freedom, and its very omnipresence, more than the scattered if repeated assertions of God's absoluteness, shows how real that absoluteness was to Philo. For the whole idea of mediation presupposed absolute Deity. The most important single formulation of this mediation is in terms of the Logos and Powers of God, which represent God in his dealings with the world, sometimes described elaborately, more often, and more strikingly, referred to in so casually assured a way

that it is apparent they must have been traditional and accepted in his group.

Philo abbreviates the conception in one passage as follows:

While God exists ontologically after the analogy of the One²⁰ he is yet two with respect to his highest and first Powers, Goodness and Authority; by Goodness he begat the universe, and by Authority he rules what he has begotten. And there is a third thing which, being in between them, brings the two together, his Logos, for by Logos God is both ruler and good. . . . The Logos was conceived in God's mind before all things and is manifest in connection with all things.²¹

That is, the One God gives forth a Stream from himself, the first representation of which is the Logos, most like God because it is the primal emanation; it becomes differentiated in lower types of manifestation, and the Logos is always a term which can be used to include all the lower manifestations. Similarly, since the Logos is a projection of divine reality and being, it can be called God, and all the workings of the Logos can be called the acts or works of God. Clarity on this first point is essential if the rest is to be intelligible. The logic of the ancient world had gone unerringly to the conception that God is uniquely One and self-contained, quite independent of and unrelated to anything but himself. Yet God must be not only existence, but cause and source of existence in everything else. That is, there must be an

Unrelated Being who is yet somehow related. Ancient thought had early turned to two figures to represent this, light and rulership, and Philo uses both repeatedly. The figure of light has already been mentioned, but must be reëmphasized. It is the primary guide to Philo's philosophy and mysticism alike. The sun, that most fascinating natural phenomenon, typified the highest reality as much to Plato and Aristotle as to the religious devotees of Egypt. For, as did nothing else, the sun combined self-sufficiency with influence upon the world. Burning aloof in the sky eternally, it needed no fuel or renewing, was complete in itself as were not even the other stars, which early, after the analogy of the moon and planets, seemed to shine with light reflected from the sun. Out of the sun's complete self-sufficiency there yet flowed forth to the universe its life and light. All existence and life seemed completely the product of the solar stream. No wonder that Philo, like his neighbors, saw in this unique thing the most satisfactory figure of the unique Being of the immaterial God, who also, and even more so, was existence of and for himself, and at the same time was the Creative and Ruling Power in the universe by means of a Stream which went out from him.

The ruling power of God suggested analogy with the absolute powers of the king who governed his subjects though never seen by more than a handful of them. From the king in his isolation went forth repre-

sentatives, like the satraps of Persia, whose power over other men lay in the fact that they transmitted to the subjects the ruling power and will of the unseen monarch. So widely was this figure used that even in Christian writings the frequent title *De Monarchia* should be translated for moderns *On Monotheism*.

In the passage just quoted, and frequently throughout his writings, Philo shows that this current notion was self-evident for him to use in expressing the relation of God with the world, and the way in which a measure of reality has come to the material world from the one and only Reality. The projection of God no more reduces God's powers than the rays of sunlight seem to reduce the apparently eternal sun. And as sunlight even today is often called the sun in such expressions as "The sun is bright in a south room," so the Stream from God was often spoken of as God's presence in the world. And as we at one time identify the sun's rays with the sun, and at another sharply distinguish the two, so the Logos, Philo's commonest term for the Stream, could be referred to as an entity in itself, even called the Son of God, while its lower manifestations, Ruling Power and Creative Power, could be discussed as things of independent existence. This vacillation in language has provoked a library of debate on the question whether in Philo the Logos is personal or not. If we are to follow Philo rather than our own categories we

shall have to learn with him to answer the questions Yes and No simultaneously. If Philo were asked the question he would undoubtedly have fallen back into his purer metaphysics and denied that the Logos was anything but the flow of divine Reality, and that the Logos had no more reality in itself than has a ray of sunshine apart from the sun. Yet his soul was so warmed by the Logos-ray of God that he often thought of that ray as a thing in itself, something which could be made vivid by personification, even a rudimentary mythology, as he tried to express the fulness of his thought and experience. The ancient world was presented with an entirely new sort of problem when the Christians later identified the Logos with the extremely personal and individual Jesus of Nazareth, and so were compelled to solve the metaphysical difficulties which the elevation of that personality to deity presented to monotheism. Philo is completely unaware of the possibility of such a problem. He was not even committed to the term Logos: Sophia or Virtue would do just as well. The fact that in one place he says that Sophia is the source of the Logos, in another that the Logos is the source of Sophia, need not bother us any more than it bothered him, when we come to recognize with him that any description of the Stream has only relative value, value for us; that is, in helping us to visualize the richness of a conception through its varied figurative presentations, not in being a literal statement

of metaphysical fact in the way that the doctrine of the Trinity was later presented.

The term Logos is itself not the least difficulty for a modern in understanding what Philo meant. Logos has for centuries been translated by the English "Word," following the Vulgate Latin *Verbum*, but of all the scores of nuances in the Greek term, that is one of the few meanings which Logos never has. Even Colson has continued the utterly misleading translation. A reader of Philo or of early Christian thought must first of all wipe that meaning from his mind and use the untranslated term Logos as he would use a new term in chemistry. The Greek for "word" was not logos but *ρῆμα* or *ὄνομα*, or other expressions.²² Logos means primarily the formulation and expression of thought in speech, but from this it took on a variety of associated meanings. For example, it could mean the formula by which a thing is constituted, like a formula in chemistry; so Aristotle most commonly used it. It could mean a phrase or speech of almost any kind or length, even an oration, but never a single word. And it could be turned back upon the process by which utterance was formulated in thought, and so come to mean reason. In this sense study of logos as reason is logic, the science of formulation of thought. The Stoics distinguished two types of logos, that within the mind, or reason, and that projected in speech. For either of these the term logos could be used without the distinguishing modifiers, and the

context must show us to which type of logos, reason or speech, reference was being made. The term logos had many other special meanings: it should often be translated "ratio" or "proportion" in the mathematical sense; the ὁρθὸς λόγος, the "right logos," was reason producing proper formulations with special reference to legal thought, so that the "right logos" of Nature was Natural Law; the ἴδιος λόγος, the "private logos," was a private account in the sense of the privy purse; the ιερὸς λόγος, the "sacred logos," was the secret revelation given to an initiate in the Mystery Religions. Logos, then, is almost anything but the English "word," though occasionally Philo takes Old Testament passages on the "word" of God, the ψῆμα, and allegorizes them in terms of the Logos. But since he can also allegorize the rivers of Eden or almost anything else for Logos, the allegory does not indicate that to him logos and ψῆμα had the same meaning.

Logos is then Philo's favorite term for the Stream of God's radiation, and almost all these special meanings come in to enrich his conception. The Logos is now the reason of God and now the projected reason; it is the Law of Nature, and, for mystic purposes, the ultimate Reality given an initiate.

Upon the world and man the effect of this radiation from God is so rich that it could be described only in terms of basic differentiations within the Logos. The first two differentiations have already appeared in the passage quoted, in which God, onto-

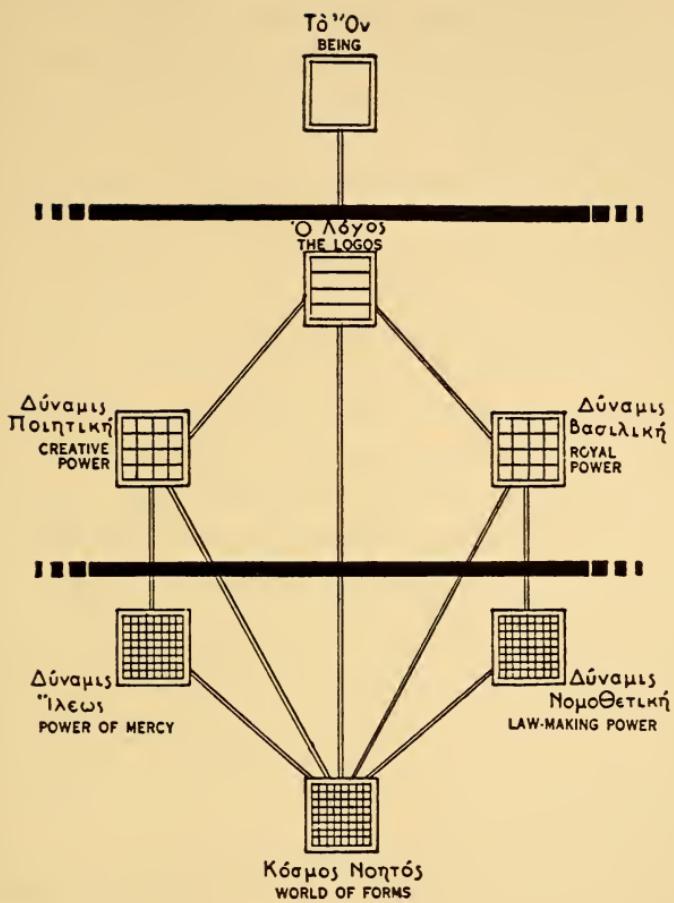
logically a unit, is really a trinity in external relation; namely, the Logos and its two primary manifestations in a Creative Power and a Ruling Power. These are the two aspects of deity most generally important for the universe, and their meaning is quite clear: they are the functions of God as the Creator and those as the Ruler of the world. Both are united in the Logos itself, since both are but aspects of the single flow of divinity to the world. But each shows peculiar characteristics. The more popular division of God's character into his mercy and justice are subsidiary to these, the Mercy to Creative Power, and Law to the Ruling Power, first as Law of Nature and then as Law of Judaism. These two Powers are often also contrasted by Philo as the merciful as over against the punitive activity of God.

The tendency to divide the Logos-Stream into particular manifestations led Philo to define the total radiation in terms of seven constituent members: first, God; then a group of three consisting of the Logos with the two primary Powers, Creative and Ruling; then a second group of three whose names are less standardized. In one carefully detailed description the Creative Power subtends Merciful Power, Ruling Power subtends Legal Power, and all together are subtended by the Platonic World of Forms. That is, God and the Powers together constitute a sevenfold deity, with the One Being transcending the other six and ultimately alone having existence, just as the lower five are only aspects of the single radiation, the

Logos itself. For convenience one of the diagrams is reproduced from my *By Light, Light*, in which work the subject is more fully discussed and documented. By the progressively heavy shading of the different Powers I have attempted to portray Philo's notion that the lower Powers are progressively less pure manifestations of Deity, which is pure only at the very top. The heavy black transverse lines which divide the different groups correspond to a distinction which Philo himself repeatedly makes. Pure Being is off by itself in complete isolation. The Logos and first two Powers are God in projection, but are themselves utterly apart from anything material. Separated from them are those aspects of the Stream which, while themselves as completely separable as are the Forms in Plato's *Symposium* and *Phædrus*, are yet, like the Forms even in Plato, capable of some sort of representation in matter.

Just how this Stream impressed itself upon matter to make the universe Philo discusses in two places, in each of which he presents a different theory. Nowhere does he show the relation of this particular sevenfold formulation of the Stream with creation.

The first, and on the whole much more important, description of creation is in the treatise *On the Creation of the World*, where the problem is attacked, as we have seen,²³ in a purely Platonic and Neo-Pythagorean way: creation was the process by which the "passive element," unformed matter, was given motion, form, and life by the transcendent active Cause. First was projected what we have come to see was the



lowest Power, that is the World of Forms, here identified with the whole Stream, the Logos itself, the true world of which the material world is a defective copy. The copy is defective because of the limitations of matter itself. The story is told, for all the embellishments of number speculation, very much after the story of the six days in Genesis, and the only suggestion of the exact relation of the World of Forms to the material world is in the figure of the seal. For the World of Forms, collectively and individually, seems to be a great seal which God stamps upon matter to give it form.²⁴ Philo shows that Platonists had met Aristotle's criticisms of the uselessness of the World of Forms by making them not ultimate existence but the thoughts of a higher principle, God. For there had to be something ultimate beyond the World of Forms, even beyond the Form of the Good, to produce the Forms and to be in such domination over them that it could unite the Forms, however imperfectly, with matter. The idea is so slight an extension upon the *Timæus*, though so important, that I cannot believe it was not by Philo's time a tradition in the Platonic school.

Philo's second account of creation is one found in the peculiar treatise, *Who Is the Heir of Divine Things?*²⁵ Here Philo discusses creation more as a technical philosopher, and gives us again Pythagorean Platonism with the emphasis this time definitely upon the Pythagorean side. God projects the Logos which is the principle of unity and which at the same time is given the peculiar name, the "Cutter." The

Logos-Cutter forms first the intelligible world and then the material world after the manner and model of the intelligible world. Crude matter, which is again a datum of creation, was first bisected by the Logos-Cutter into light and heavy, then these two were each bisected to produce four, which became the four elements. Each of these was again divided, as earth into mainland and islands, water into fresh and salt. The process of division kept on until it had produced animate and inanimate objects, wild and cultivated fruits, wild and tame animals, male and female, and the rest. In every case the division was not only a separation but a reunion, for the Logos was the Glue as well as the Cutter; that is, it was the principle of cohesion which makes the universe a unit in spite of its manifold divisions. The object of this process was to make the universe according to the basic principle of equality, and material creation had its ideal counterpart when the Logos as the Monad had, by repeated bisections in the Unlimited Dyad, produced the whole system of arithmetical numbers.

Both of these theories of creation emphasize the fact that creation is not something done by a remote force or mind, but that the divine is left permanently in the world to be its guide, to fill it with providential care. Philo's repeated, almost unbroken, emphasis upon the providence of God in the world has often been taken to be a result of Stoic influence, but it seems to me to be much more a Stoic term used for the God of Jewish piety, who had, throughout the Bible, close contact and control in natural and human af-

fairs. Certainly Philo insists repeatedly that the world is not cut off from God, and his making the universe into a "house" of God is an expansion of the Jewish tabernacle or temple rather than a Stoic notion that God was to be identified with the material world. In this sense Philo's Logos too stands in sharp contrast to the Stoic Logos. For Philo's Logos was the collective term for immaterial reality, in the Platonic sense, though a radiation from God, while the Stoic Logos was the basic fiery substance of matter itself. True the Stoics divided the Logos early in the process of creation into active and passive principles, the reasoning and unreasoning, but that these two were ultimately one was the major premise, the distinctive major premise, of the whole Stoic metaphysic. Philo's Logos had many of the functions of the Stoic Logos: it was the reasoning principle in the universe, Natural Law for all men and matter, but it was something projected into matter from God, and was never in any sense to be considered a property of matter, or matter a property of it. The Logos of the Stoics was the ultimate principle; Philo's Logos had even existence only relatively, like the existence of a sunbeam or speech which is relative to its source. Yet the Logos seemed all the more powerful a force in the world by the very fact that it brought into the world something utterly different from any property of matter, while in itself it was so exalted that it could be represented in matter at all only in a secondary manifestation, that is by those Powers which he assigned to the lowest group of the Seven. All natural phenomena

partook of its abstract nature in which was equality, to Philo the principle of number, and the Logos worked out that principle in the whole range of numbers, time, and space, so that what was implicit in principle in the Logos became at least in part explicit in the multifarious balance and attunement of the universe. The universe, while thus as intimately under the providence of God as any Stoic imagined, had meaning at all only with reference to something essentially beyond and foreign to what was inherent in or possible for matter.

Such a view of the universe seems to me to be not at all a thing to dismiss lightly. It is a serious and sensible philosophy of nature. Many modern scientists seem to me to be approaching a very comparable sort of solution in their feeling that the universe cannot be understood simply in terms of a description of material phenomena without some point of reference, some principle of mathematical relationship, according to which they may hope to explain phenomena. But this is a problem quite beyond my competence. Whatever the scientists may be doing, here is still a philosophy which gives a possible answer to the demand of human hearts that we square science in some way with human experience and hope, the experience that man is living in a world where order becomes intelligible ultimately in mathematical terms, and the hope that the universe is not indifferent to human values.

In Philo's presentation the formalization of the Logos-Stream into distinct Powers is its most difficult aspect for modern minds, as it was the most helpful in

an age when the growing popularity of Neoplatonism and of Gnosticism alike showed that such a mythological division of divine power into distinct principles was highly acceptable. But Philo is to be distinguished from most others of his age in the fact that he so often insists that these Powers are not independent realities. They are formulations merely for our convenience. We cannot understand the rule of God or Nature unless we understand that the ultimate reality can express itself in mercy quite as much as in a system of law and inevitability. Mercy and law appear from the human level to be distinct, antithetical. The full nature of God cannot be apprehended without both, else we have either a God of spineless sentiment or one of demonic grimness. But these aspects or forms of divine manifestation are two, or six, or seven, only from our human point of view. The complete mystic, Philo tells us, who rises beyond human limitations, comes finally to perceive how truly they are one in the Logos. Only the full mystic is the philosopher who really can apprehend the oneness of the Stream above its multiple functions and manifestations, just as the complete Platonist was one not who had had the forms explained to him and had accepted them, but who had had the flash of intuition which enabled him to apprehend them.

In an Introduction there can be no attempt at presenting Philo's ramifications of this basic idea of the One and its relation to the world. The details are indeed elaborate, often contradictory and confusing, but can be understood at all only if this general con-

ception is borne in mind throughout. And the orientation of Philo's thinking with the different schools cannot be discussed adequately without consideration of the details. Platonism as it had been elaborated in Pythagorean schools or under continued Pythagorean influence still seems to me the system which as a whole Philo most closely followed. God has taken the place of the Idea of the Good, and become, what Aristotle said Plato's Forms failed to present, the Moving Cause. How much this represents a change in Platonism from the way in which Plato himself taught it we shall never know unless we find more of Plato's Lecture on the Good. And how much Philo's Pythagoreanism comes from an elaboration of Platonism with Pythagorean elements introduced into Platonism after Plato's death we shall likewise not know unless we get more of Plato's other lectures to the inner circle of the Academy. The elaborate use of Pythagorean number in the *Timaeus* suggests that such number speculation as Philo presents was by no means foreign to Plato's own thinking. The difficulty is that when we compare Philo with the Neo-Pythagorean fragments we are without any criterion to determine how much of what resembles Platonism in them has been brought into Pythagorean tradition from Plato's teaching, and how much of it is genuine early Pythagoreanism which Plato knew and was himself elaborating. Until this problem is solved, which has never been done, or even, so far as I know, seriously attacked, it will be impossible to determine what Philo took from each of these schools.

The “vast amount of Stoicism” which Colson²⁶ rightly saw in Philo seems to me much more a matter of terminology and minor detail than anything which seriously affected Philo’s main position. But since Colson himself admits that Philo opposed Stoic materialistic metaphysics and the “kernel of Stoic ethics,” it does not seem to me, in spite of the number of times we must turn to Stoicism in explaining Philo’s language, that “whether the Stoic outweighs the Platonist would be a difficult question to decide.” We shall see in the next chapter how Philo continues in the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition when he discusses man and ethics. We keep ourselves in needless confusion in reading Philo if, for all our recognition of Stoic elements, we do not read him as one whose basic philosophical outlook was that of the Platonists and Pythagoreans.

NOTES—CHAPTER V

1. *By Light, Light*, 50 ff.
2. See the *Laws*, 890d, where it is stated that the ancient laws which establish the existence of the gods are φύσει.
3. See above, pp. 85 f.
4. See my “A Neo-Pythagorean Source in Philo Judæus,” *Yale Classical Studies*, III (1932), 117–164, and below, pp. 140 f.
5. Völker, *Fortschritt und Vollendung bei Philo von Alexandrien* (Leipzig, 1938), 209, n. 1.
6. See the *Bibliography*, p. 250, n. 1.
7. In this connection it is necessary only to mention Stobæus.
8. *Mut.*, 184; *LA*, ii, 2.
9. *Spec.*, i, 279.
10. *Praem.*, 40; cf. *Cont.*, 2.
11. *Spec.*, i, 277; cf. *Legat.*, 5; *Gig.*, 45.
12. *Decal.*, 81; *Spec.*, ii, 53.
13. *LA*, iii, 51.
14. *Cher.*, 49.

15. *LA*, i, 44. In *Fug.*, 75, God is space, to which created things can take refuge.

16. *Post.*, 5.

17. *Conf.*, 180.

18. *Fug.*, 79.

19. *LA*, iii, 78.

20. Philo puts it this way because actually God was beyond the Monad and the One, which, accurately, exist after analogy with God rather than God after analogy with the One: *LA*, ii, 3.

21. *Cher.*, 27 f.

22. The relation of these words to $\lambda\circ\gamma\circ\varsigma$ is clearly expressed in Plato's *Sophist*, 261E-262B.

23. See above, pp. 41 ff.

24. *Opif.*, 18, 20, 25.

25. For expansion and documentation of this, see my "A Neo-Pythagorean Source in Philo Judæus," *Yale Classical Studies*, III (1932), 117-164.

26. In the Introduction to his Loeb translation, I, xviii.

CHAPTER VI

THE PHILOSOPHER: MAN AND ETHICS

IN the universe described in the last chapter, man has a unique place. He was created out of matter like the rest, but given something higher and immaterial. Here the Biblical description of God breathing into man formed from the dust of the earth led with no difficulty to Greek theories that the mind or soul of man is an immediate presence of immaterial reality within him.

In all of Philo's approach to purely philosophical problems there is great indifference to consistency. We have seen that he can without difficulty present two utterly different theories of creation so long as both represent creation as the invasion of matter by the Logos from God. When Philo comes to describe man he is even more inconsistent. In the Appendix to my *By Light, Light* I have traced the great variety of his descriptions of the human mind, and shown what even in Philo is a surprising jumble of contradictions. Into those details we need not go here. It is sufficient to say that Philo's basic point of view is again constant: that the human personality is a mixture (*σύγκριμα*), made up of a higher part, the mind, and a greater or less number of subsidiary, bodily, parts. He can follow the Platonic, the Aristotelian, or the Stoic formulation for those lower parts, but the higher principle is always kept in distinct isolation.

Even at this point the student will at first be confused because, if the passages in which Philo discusses mind are put together, Philo will be found now to praise and now to disparage the human mind. On the one hand the mind is a hopeless dupe of the senses. Before it came into the body it was blind, deaf, and impotent. It is earth-born and a lover of the body. Mind, from this point of view, depends upon the senses for all its data, has memory, produces impulses, but its conclusions are only opinion, not knowledge. In contrast Philo says in other passages that the mind is an extension (*ἀπόσπασμα*) of God or the Logos, not a separated fragment, "for no part of the divine existence is cut off into something separate, but only is extended." That is, the mind in us is a direct ray in the Stream of divine radiation. As such our own mind, when it classifies the divisions of creation, follows the creative process of the Logos itself.¹ In mystic experience the same contradiction appears. In some passages the human mind seems in mysticism to be restored to its proper unity with the divine, and in others divinity comes as a beam of light from the outside which we cannot apprehend until the light of our own mind is extinguished.

Philo's contradictions on this point largely disappear when we recall that in Aristotle there was a distinction between two minds within us, a higher and a lower, and that Philo's remarks about the human mind no longer clash when what Philo says of the mind at any one time is referred to one or the other of these two minds. The conception is in any case not an

obscure one. The nearest parallel for us is the modern popular distinction between our reason and our conscience. Reason, we popularly believe, is a faculty by which sense perceptions, memories, and ideas received from others are blended in such a way that we come to conclusions through the processes described by logic. If this is now complicated by the addition of fixed ideas in the subconscious, and of the disruption of disinterested logical processes by emotions and desires, the picture is still largely the same. In contrast we popularly think that conscience is an immediate awareness of truth, especially in the realm of moral judgments. The two are so distinct that we can speak of reasoning with or against our conscience, as we might make formal protest or argument with another person. In the ancient world the higher mind which has survived with us as conscience was an apprehension of much more than moral imperative; it was the organ by which all metaphysical truth could ideally be comprehended, though it, like the modern conscience, could be, and usually was, dulled by neglect. Unfortunately we have no way to trace the idea of the double mind from Aristotle to Philo. Yet it seems necessary to assume, if we are to believe that Philo would have been understood by his contemporaries, that they were so familiar with this idea of the double mind that they would have understood without difficulty to which mind Philo was at any time referring. The double mind is something which had, I am sure, an important development in the hellenistic age.

When these difficulties are past, Philo's ideas of

psychology become much easier. The Stoic eightfold division of the soul into the ruling reason, the five senses, and the two powers of speech and generation; the Platonic division into reason, spirit or emotion, and desire; the Aristotelian division into the parts which are nourished, those which have sense perception, and those which reason; all these Philo can use interchangeably, guided largely by the numbers or details involved in a scriptural passage he may at the time be allegorizing. Or he may say that man consists of the body, sense perception, stomach and its pleasures, as well as the other aspects, in fact the human composite as a whole.² The soul appears to be now the higher mind, and now the principle of animation in matter which animals have as well as men: it is the mind which is the distinct prerogative of man. Man, then, is man because of his mind, to a lesser degree because of his lower mind, to a greater degree because of the presence of the Logos-extension which is his higher mind.

The personality, which Philo comes nearer to recognizing as a problem than any of the ancients, is not in the higher mind, but in the mixture, that is in the composite of bodily parts, soul, and mind.

We have ourselves, and all that goes to make these selves, as a loan. I, indeed, am a combination of soul and body, seeming to have mind, reason (or speech) and sense perception, yet I find that none of these is my own property. For where was my body before I was born, and whither will it go when I have died? And what has become of the distinct life-periods of this "self" which ap-

pears to be a constant? Where is the babe that once I was, the little boy, the stripling, the young adolescent, the youth, the young buck, the young man, and the adult? Whence came the soul and whither will it go, and how long will it live with *us*? Can we tell what is its essential nature? And when did we come to possess it? Before birth? But then we did not exist. After death? But then we, who, in our junction with our bodies, are mixtures and have qualities, shall not exist, but shall push on into the rebirth, by which, becoming joined to immaterial things, we shall become unmixed and without qualities.³

Philo goes on directly to a further contrast between "us" and our souls. The soul knows "us" but "we" do not know the soul. It commands, "we" obey. It secures a divorce from us when it wishes and leaves "our house" bereft of life. Its nature is so subtle that it gives the body no grip upon it. Philo was so anxious to deny the identity of the ego with the soul that he temporarily almost confuses the ego with the body. Yet Philo's point is clear. The human personality on earth is a mixture, in which a soul, here a generic term for what would more accurately be called the higher mind,⁴ has become united to the body. Our personalities when babies are different from the same personalities when adult because the mixture is different. And it is clear that the personality which survives death cannot be the earthly personality, for the immaterial part in us will then be joined to the immaterial, no longer to the material, and that will be a new birth, that is, a birth of a new personality. We

shall see that through mystic experience Philo, like the Christians later, hoped to anticipate that experience while still joined to the body. With this in mind the "new creature" of Christian experience becomes so freshly intelligible that I cannot believe a philosophy of the soul or mind similar to Philo's did not lie behind many early Christian expressions.

Since man is made up of such a variety of things, in which one element stands out in unique supremacy, Philo in one mood saw the purpose of life to be escape into rebirth in the immaterial, but more generally to be the acceptance of the fact of the mixture, and the domination of the lower elements by the higher. The two solutions were not opposed to each other in his mind, any more than they were in later Christianity. If Paul wanted, in Christian terminology, to crucify the flesh, and Philo wanted to escape from it, drown it in the Red Sea, both were talking of an experience after which they still had to carry the body, dead or alive, with them. And on no point is the thinking of the two so similar as on the ideal adjustment of the soul and body for one who has found the higher reality.

The whole personality, which has been seen by various formulations to be always quite complex, was to Philo a city within itself, as it had been to Plato, and as, by implication, it was to Paul. Plato's elaborate approach to the subjective commonwealth through study of the civic commonwealth had become so proverbial that later writers thought and spoke in terms of the parallel without any need of stating the com-

parison explicitly. Every man is made up of a great diversity of emotions, desires, and senses, along with the mind or minds, and the problem is how to get them all to live together in peace. One solution is for the lower impulses to swamp the mind, so that a man becomes a helpless subject of their whims. This is a state of anarchy, in which there is no single principle of rulership. Almost as bad a state is tyranny, where the lower mind, the mind typified by Pharaoh in Egypt which looks only toward material things, gives out laws by which virtue and truth are violated. To all this the higher mind is an alien. As much a part of "us" as any other, the higher mind is yet of totally different character, since it is an extension or presence of the immaterial in contrast to the material nature of our other parts. It alone has the power of making true order within us. Each part of our constitution, to be sure, has its own function and proper objective. The law of the stomach is that it should nourish the body, and create the sensation of hunger when food is needed. Each bodily organ, the eye, the hand, the sexual member, the foot, has its proper contribution, and is destined by nature to certain activities. It is by Natural Law that each does its work and demands its recognition. Even the human, the lower, mind, we infer, though Philo does not speak of this directly, has its proper place and duty: obviously that duty is the direction of the sense impulses and functions through its power of coördination and memory. But the trouble is that while each member functions according to Natural Law, it has in itself no control. The

stomach, the eyes, the sex organs, can, if allowed to go unchecked, throw all balance to the winds, and produce a glutton, a spineless esthete, or a sexual pervert. Or the lower mind can produce, if itself unchecked, a man of some balance in his physical life, but one still directed wholly to material gratification. Only one of our elements, the higher mind, has the power to produce a law or rulership which can bring true legal balance into the conflict of laws of our individual members. For just as in the universe the activities of each part have to be subordinated and controlled by a principle of universal law which is the immaterial Logos, so into man that Logos can bring the higher, the true, law through the extension of itself which is within him. One of the frequent names in Philo for that higher principle is "Spirit" ($\piνεῦμα$), as well as Logos, and, because of the scriptural account of the "breath" ($\piνεῦμα$) of God given to man at creation, Philo often prefers to use the word Spirit when he speaks of the Logos in relation to man, how it comes in at inspiration, and abides in him as the higher mind.⁵ Hence Philo would fully have approved Paul's words: "The mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the spirit is life and peace: because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be."⁶

The laws of the members, including the lower mind, are those in conflict with the law of the higher mind or Spirit of God, that Spirit both as the universal law and as the highest principle in man. The only possible solution is the conquest of the lower members

by the higher mind, not their annihilation, though their first defeat is so complete that they seem crucified or drowned in the sea. The permanent adjustment is not, during this life at least, disembodied existence, but complete regeneration, the goal which Paul called "the redemption of the body," but which he more commonly, like Philo, called by the legal-ethical term, δικαιοσύνη, or justice. This term with both men still seems to me to have the meaning which Plato gave it in the *Republic*; namely, a perfect regimentation of the state, civic or subjective, by which the higher faculties are in command, and the lower members perform their functions freely and fully, but keep each to its own business according to the laws fixed by the proper governor. The law which would bring this true regimentation, for Philo as for Paul, could not possibly be the product of the mixed personality which is "ourselves." It must be the Law of Nature, the Law of the Spirit, or the Law of God, by whatever name it might be called at the moment, else we are "seeking to establish our own justice, not subject to the justice of God."⁷ Nothing distinguishes both thinkers more sharply from Stoic ethics than the refusal to build up the inner ethical harmony from within, to conquer the lower impulses by what of the higher we naturally have at birth. For we shall see that Philo, like Paul, despaired of achieving the end without a new union with the Universal Spirit: the fragment or extension within him was hopeless against the forces of his lower nature unless it was freshly united

and augmented in the divine Spirit or Logos as a whole.

For this inner adjustment Philo has many names. It is peace, harmony, virtue, justice, salvation, and when he has special elements in mind he can call it by names of special virtues. Or he can in allegory personalize any specific virtue and discuss it as though it were the equivalent of the Logos or Sophia itself. Junction with this is that higher union by which the state of true virtue or justice is introduced into the soul.

Virtue is for Philo, then, primarily an inner state,⁸ corresponding to the nature of God and the Logos. When the lure of pleasure becomes seductive, Philo, like Socrates in the *Symposium*, urges: "Look rather on the genuine beauty of Virtue, gaze on her steadfastly, till yearnings sink into thy marrow, and until, like a magnet, she draw thee on and bring thee nigh and bind thee fast to the object of thy desire."⁹ This heavenly Virtue Philo represents elaborately in allegory in terms of Rebecca, who gives men to drink; that is, gives of her own beauty to men who come to her apart from sense perception.¹⁰ The figure begins as Virtue and soon becomes Sophia, but that is because the two are one, not only in the Socratic sense that virtue is knowledge, but in the mystical sense in which all particular names for the Stream from God blend as inextricably into each other as that Stream unites in itself all human distinctions of value. For the particular virtues, justice, intelligence, bravery,

and self-control, the four Greek virtues with a fifth, piety, are subsumed in “generic virtue”¹¹ which “was created after the analogy of the Logos of God,”¹² though the four rivers of Eden are the four particular (Greek) virtues, each of which is so beyond humanity that they all exist thus differentiated in the World of Forms which Eden represents. Indeed all earthly virtue is an imitation of heavenly Virtue which God has given to man. Growing as a plant in man, and synonymous with the Right Logos ($\delta\ \delta\rho\theta\delta\varsigma\ \lambda\circ\gamma\circ\varsigma$), virtue is like the sun which illuminates the dark places of the soul, and nothing can be more impious than to think—as the Stoics did—that virtue is an achievement of our own rather than a divine gift.¹³

Philo thus carries on the Platonic or Socratic idea that virtue is one, but like Plato, when he praises a single virtue, Philo is apt to subordinate the others to it in such a way that the single virtue itself seems to become generic virtue. Each is in turn the “queen” of virtues, and often others beside the Greek four. So piety is the queen,¹⁴ also faith.¹⁵ And the praises of justice which we have been considering are really a description of generic virtue considered from the point of view of justice.

All this may seem to have little ethical value as we usually think of ethics. Justice is entirely a subjective state thus far, and virtue seems to be something man would achieve in the closet rather than the market place. The point is that to Philo the external act was the fruit of an internal state. Justice in acts toward one's fellow men is not something distinct from one's

inner state. The whole of natural and human existence was to him not only in theory, but in burning fact, dependent for its reality upon its connection with the immaterial. Hence Philo's scorn of Stoic self-righteousness. Virtue begins not with the effort to treat other men justly, but with a sense of our weakness, a new and God-given regimentation of our inner lives, after which just acts will follow as a matter of course. The judge must be animate justice, and then give to men the divine justice in his soul. It is not that Philo would at any point disregard the practice of justice. Virtue has its double aspect, the theoretical or mystical, and the practical.¹⁶ It is represented by the tree of life in Eden, which should grow in all our hearts as the dominant mind. It should produce fruit, like the tree, which is both "good to look upon," that is, of mystical value (the Greek pun on θεωρητική is untranslatable), and "good to eat," that is, fructifies in daily life. In this I think that the Calvinistic scorn of the "merely moral" man has only exaggerated an idea that was central in the early Church, and likewise in Philo. Philo does not use the vivid Pauline expression that the virtues are "fruits of the Spirit," but this allegory of the fruit of the tree of life is very close to it and indeed seems the same thing in Philo's more labored and circuitous diction.

Hitherto it would be extremely difficult to find vital parallels from Judaism for Philo's conception of virtue. True, many Jews, particularly the prophets, had made virtue a thing of the heart, not merely of act. But nothing in Jewish tradition had made virtue a

thing in itself which, as Logos or Sophia, could become the dominant mind within man and introduce into his soul the divine order of Natural Law. Our ignorance of contemporary thought within the Mystery Religions and our almost complete dependence upon Plutarch for contemporary mystical philosophy make it impossible for us to estimate what Judaism has contributed to this view: but I cannot help feeling that the contribution was very great. The skeleton of Philo's thought is found complete in the Neo-Pythagorean fragments, which like Philo say that human virtue is the ruling of the lower members by the mind, and the attunement of the mind with the Right Logos of Nature, along with many other details of Philonic thought.¹⁷ But the mystic warmth of Philo is entirely lacking from their coldly analytic presentations. Much passion and devotion must have gone into the Mystery Religions, as Apuleius shows us; yet as our sources stand, Philo's vivid sense of God along with his theory, his passion for achievement of virtue within himself, cannot be reproduced from paganism. The intellect seems to me entirely hellenistic, as well as the formulation of the goal and the path to the goal, but the fervor is prophetic Judaism still, the overwhelming sense that man is lost if he does not put himself into right relation with the divine. Unfortunately this Jewish feeling cannot be isolated and documented: into notes whose pitch and scale follow the Greek modes have come new overtones and rhythm which make the song Jewish, just as a negress singing "You Take the High Road" in

"swing" makes the Scottish ballad almost as true a product of the negro spirit as is "Ol' Man River." Perception of the Jewish fervor must grow as one becomes more acquainted with Philo. But it should not lead, as it occasionally has done, to deny reality to the Greek skeleton on which Judaism is now growing, to the new song the old voice is singing. For all the similarities between Philo and the Psalms, there are as tremendous differences as between Philo and the Neo-Pythagoreans. Philo is not one or the other, he is both, or a new thing made out of both, as, I am sure, was the whole tradition of Judaism in the Diaspora. The child may resemble the father and mother in this or that, but the child is a new personality who must be understood in himself, not as a mere combination of aspects of his parents. We shall not have learned to read Philo until we learn that Philo's group was "neither Jew nor Greek," but a new creature in being both, and in being probably itself unconscious of what it owed directly to either parent.

As Philo thought that any specific aspect in matter was a manifestation of the immaterial, so he regarded all specific virtues in conduct as applications of general principles, themselves the only reality, of virtue. Accordingly when he came to the detailed laws of the Torah, he treated them from two points of view: first how they were all concrete applications of the general principles of law expressed in the Decalogue, which code itself was a formulation of Natural Law; and, secondly, how they were likewise manifestations of the primary (Greek) virtues.

That is, the theory of Philo's ethics throughout was that ethical conduct is still the counterpart of inner virtue, in that it is the realization of the Logos or Natural Law in the material world. Philo's elaborate arguments to show the relation of Jewish Law to Natural Law can be dismissed as the rationalization by which a Jew defended a loyalty which was quite antecedent to its justification, but such a dismissal is only half a truth. Philo has kept a practical loyalty to Jewish observance, and yet he has sacrificed every Jewish sanction of that observance to give a Greek sanction to the whole. This Philo may have done incidentally, as Völker thinks, but it does not seem to me to be so. To the Greek scheme of social ethics he adapts his Judaism as completely as he made the Greek psychology and metaphysics the core of his personal ethics.

It must throughout be remembered that virtue, even virtuous conduct, was for Philo not merely a social matter. He divides the Decalogue into two tables indicating the relations of man with God and with society respectively, and points out that while some men cultivate the love of God, and others the love of man, when anyone does either to the exclusion of the other, he is only "half perfect in his *virtue*," whereby virtue is clearly a term which includes all of a man's relations.¹⁸ The all-inclusive words for social ideals are justice and love of fellow man, φιλανθρωπία.

Justice is a term which connects human conduct with the Law of Nature, for it is an expression of that Pythagorean ultimate principle, equality, ἴσοτης, on

which all the distribution of creation, especially in the sense of proportional equality, is based. Justice in society is equality in the sense of giving to each man what is his due. To a superior person this means the gift of power and wealth to which the inferior soul cannot without impertinence aspire. The wise are the natural rulers of the human race, and only when they rule is there any hope of a happy society. It is justice or equality which puts the man of lower gifts in a lower station, while to the truly slavish minds the best thing that can come is slavery,¹⁹ since slavery is a sort of training for them.²⁰ This is all a matter of equality; the giving to each man what is his due. But the criterion is still the inner one. In his essay *On Nobility* Philo points out that true nobility, by which man should expect prestige and rewards in society, is by no means a matter of what possessions a man actually has, or what is his inheritance. Nothing is noble but the noble soul.

Philo has many beautiful passages in praise of φιλανθρωπία, love or kindness to one's fellows. There is no doubt of his sincerity in these passages. He certainly reflects the Jewish coupling of love of God with love of man when he calls the latter "the twin sister of piety," "the plain and level road leading to holiness."²¹ But it must frankly be admitted that Philo was not a man of great humanitarian passion. This is illustrated by his remarks on slaves and slavery.

Philo accepts slavery without any protest. The Jewish slave is marked for very special treatment.

Not only is he to be liberated after seven years, and with gifts to allow him a fresh start as a free man, according to Jewish law, but he is to be treated throughout his period of servitude rather as a hired servant than as a slave. Of gentile slaves Philo has little to say except that one will get more out of them if one treats them well than if one abuses them. It is a thoroughly immoral man who will treat his slaves like cattle.²² But Philo's attitude throughout is that of a typical slave owner. Masters are not to become too dependent upon slaves, to the point that they are helpless in an emergency without slaves' attendance.²³

Let so-called masters therefore cease from imposing upon their slaves severe and scarcely endurable orders, which break down their bodies by violent usage, and force the soul to collapse before the body. You need not grudge to moderate your orders. The result will be that you yourselves will enjoy proper attention, and that your servants will carry out your orders readily and accept their duties not merely for a short time to be abandoned through their wearing out too quickly, and indeed, we may say, as if old age had prematurely overtaken them in their labors. On the contrary, they will prolong their youth to the utmost, like athletes.²⁴

After he has spoken of the consideration a master must show a Jew who has become his slave seven years for debt, Philo adds:

But the law does permit the acquisition of slaves from other nations for two reasons; first that a distinction should be made between fellow-countrymen and aliens;

secondly, that that most indispensable possession, domestic service, should not be excluded from his commonwealth. For the course of life contains a vast number of circumstances which demand the ministrations of slaves.²⁵

Philo has little patience with the brutal slave driver, and supports the Jewish law that a master who kills his slave shall himself be executed.²⁶ But he will give every benefit of doubt to the master, and plays up especially the Biblical law which exonerates the master if a slave live two days after a flogging. The basis of this law, Philo argues, is that a master has himself lost property in the death of a slave, and so the presumption is that the master would not wish to kill him. Philo says:

And it is true that anyone who kills a slave injures himself far more (*πολὺ πρότερον ἔσυτὸν βλάπτει*), as he deprives himself of the service which he receives when the slave is alive and loses his value as a piece of property, which may possibly be very considerable.²⁷

For the law that a master who knocks out the eye or tooth of a slave must set the slave at liberty Philo has no appeal to ethics: such a law clearly did not reflect his general attitude to slaves. Philo must defend these particular provisions, since they appear in the Bible, but can do so only on the basis of elaborate allegory of the eye or tooth as metaphysical symbols,²⁸ and he conspicuously does not suggest that these laws are principles which restrict the general right of a master to abuse a slave in other ways if he

wishes. He thinks corporal punishment of slaves quite a part of the institution, for he points out that bad slaves impose upon the gentleness of good masters, and need to be given the medicine of punishment,²⁹ and at such times their slavish nature will appear in their abject submission to the rod.³⁰ What a slave in ancient society could do but yield, at least in appearance, Philo does not stop to consider. When Philo is discussing at length the fact that the Jewish laws teach men gentleness and love of one's fellows, he devotes less than a fifth as much space to humanity to slaves as he does to kindness to animals.³¹

It is obvious then that in praising love of fellow men Philo was thinking of his fellows by no means in the modern ideal sense of the term. This it would be unfair to expect. He was a man of his age, a rich man of his age, and expresses the spirit of a man who would have been, by the criteria of slave owners themselves, a good master of slaves. But the idea of the general brotherhood of man in the Logos, which some of Philo's contemporaries were preaching, and which soon, as brotherhood in God or Christ, was to get fresh emphasis, is not presented.

Philo lays great stress upon the sanctity of the family, but displays a low opinion of women throughout. In this he shows his popular rather than Greek philosophical background, for Plato and the Stoics alike had been emphasizing the equal value of women.³² His remarks about the conduct of women reflect the restrictions of contemporary society. Women are to be kept in the interior parts of the house, allowed out

only under the most favorable conditions. They are supreme in matters of household management, and only there. "In nature men take precedence over women."³³ "The female is incomplete and in subjection, and belongs to the category of the passive rather than the active."³⁴ I have pointed out elsewhere that Philo's remarks about women's activity in society are much like those of Phintys, a Pythagorean woman philosopher,³⁵ but I missed the fact that while she, like the best Greek philosophers on whom Philo usually drew, says that a woman may and should have virtues of mind and body like a man, Philo throughout identifies woman with weakness, incompleteness, and actual sin.

Sexual relations Philo permits only for the sake of begetting children. "They are pleasure-lovers when they mate with their wives, not to procreate children and perpetuate the race, but like pigs and goats in quest of the enjoyment which such intercourse gives."³⁶ Divorce may apparently be had on several grounds, but Philo does not specify them.³⁷ If a woman is barren she ought properly to be divorced, since intercourse with her can produce no children; but a man who does not divorce a woman whom he married as a virgin and has loved for years, even though she has proved barren, must be excused if he has not will power to do so.³⁸ The only mention of a woman's right to divorce a husband is in case a husband brings false accusation that on marrying her he found her not a virgin. The man loses his right to divorce on any ground after such action if she chooses

to continue to live with him, but she is free to leave him if she will.³⁹

As to children, Philo relaxes in no sense the complete power of parents over children expressed in the Old Testament. It would have been strange had he done so, since the Romans likewise, if not even more than the Jews, gave the father unrestricted dominion. Philo sanctifies the duty of filial obedience by bringing from the Greeks the notion that the parent's relation is that of God to the child. This he argues from the analogy that God's preëminence in the universe is based on God's having created it, and so the father is God to the child.⁴⁰ But on one point he opposes the ideas of gentile civilization sharply: he joins the protest which all Jews were making against the exposure of undesired children. Philo's words are beautifully eloquent, picturing the helpless infants being slain, or torn by beasts, and, far from regarding the killing of children as blameless, he thinks that their very innocence makes infanticide much worse than the killing of an adult.⁴¹

We get Philo's ideas of justice in society much more by inference from his remarks on the penalties for various crimes than from any direct discussion. It is clear that he would have penalties carry out the cosmic principle of proportional equality, to each thing according to its due.

It is right to reproach those who impose penalties which are not equivalents of the offences, such as a penalty in goods for assault, or public stigma for wounding or mutilating some one, or banishment from the country and

perpetual exile for deliberate murder, or imprisonment for theft. For any element of inconsistency or inequality is opposed to the constitution which has truth for its ideal. But our law, which is the exponent of equality, commands that those who do wrong shall suffer in the same way as those whom they have injured. That is, if they have done wrong in respect to the property of their neighbors they must be punished in property; if they have committed offence against a neighbor's body, in any of its parts, sections, or sensory organs, they must be punished in body; but if they have gone so far as to plot against life, the law commands that they shall be punished with their lives. For it would mean not the confirmation, but the destruction, of law if one thing which has nothing in common with another thing, but belongs to a remote category, should suffer for that other thing. And this we say when there are no complicating circumstances: for it is not the same thing at all to inflict blows upon an ordinary person as upon one's father; or to revile a public officer and a private citizen; or to do a forbidden thing upon profane ground as to do it on sacred ground; or to offend during a festival or a religious assembly or a public sacrifice, as on a day when none of these holiday provisions applies, or on a quite ordinary day. All such matters must be taken into consideration in augmenting or diminishing the punishment.⁴²

This passage I have shown elsewhere⁴³ to be largely a criticism of Greek penology, while it is a very clever expansion of the *Lex Talionis*, the "eye for an eye," of Scripture. Philo also stresses the fact that only the guilty may pay the penalty of crime, as over against

the general custom of punishing the whole family of a serious offender.

Philo also emphasizes the duty of gentleness and humanity to enemies,⁴⁴ the remarks are undoubtedly on a higher ethical plane than most current practice, but are far from ideal. Enemy states are to be approached first with invitations to peace: one's own state may thus make a friend; it will have justice on its side, and be stronger to attack, if the overture is rejected. A woman prisoner of war is to be allowed a month of mourning before her captor uses her sexually. He is to treat her as honorably as he does a wife, and if he tires of her he is to set her free, not sell her. One does a kindness to one's enemy, such as returning a straying beast of his, in the hope of winning the enemy to friendship, for only on the basis of friendship can humanity hope to be happy. "But up to the present," he shrugs his shoulders, "such recommendations are only pious wishes."⁴⁵

Where does all this lead us? Clearly Philo had a strong sense of justice in society, and was anxious that human relations be tempered with loving-kindness.

May not our passionate affection well go out to laws charged with such kindly feeling, which teach the rich to give liberally and share what they have with others and encourage the poor not to be always dancing attendance upon the houses of the wealthy.⁴⁶

Philo's alternation between statements of complete friendliness to man as man, and what is clearly the

attitude of a man of wealth and position of his day, is a vacillation quite typical of Philo on other points such as the value of the material world itself. I cannot help feeling that Philo's concern is so much the building up of the inner ethic that, for all his obvious kindness in spirit, it would appear that social ethics had not ever been a problem of deep interest to him.

Should we seek to find in the medley of life one who is perfectly just or wise or temperate or good as a whole? Be satisfied, if you do but find one who is not unjust, is not licentious, is not cowardly, is not altogether evil. We may be content with the overthrow of the vices: the complete acquisition of the virtues is impossible for man in his present state.⁴⁷

We should indeed pray that our course may lie amid the virtues collectively; but if this be too great for human nature let us be content if it be granted one of us to have a share in some one of the particular virtues, self-control or bravery or justice or humanity.⁴⁸

That is, in his praise of justice Philo was undoubtedly sincere. He believed that in justice and kindness to our fellows lay the essential meaning of the laws of both nature and Judaism insofar as social relations are concerned. But he was not one either to go into Jewish casuistry in the best sense of the Talmud, or to criticize the accepted canons of his class. He was not an ethical utopian who expected more than was reasonably possible from human nature. His idealism was, like the idealism of the pagan world, turning in-

creasingly inward as society became less and less hopeful.

Philo's ethics are further disappointing, to thoughtful Jews as well as to gentiles, because they are so clearly dualistic, one ethic for the Jew with Jews, and another for the Jew with gentiles. This has already been suggested in the complete contrast of tone Philo reveals when he turns to the gentile slaves after he has discussed the Jew who was in temporary slavery for debt.

The question of property brings out this distinction also. Property is only a loan from God to man. All property should be regarded in this sense and no man should develop a sense of superiority because of wealth.⁴⁹

Let not the rich man collect in his house vast quantities of silver and gold, and store them up, but let him bring them forward freely in order by his cheerful bounty to soften the hard condition of the poor; nor let any man who is of high social position exalt himself and swagger boastfully, but let him honor equality and give a share of freedom of speech to the lowly.⁵⁰

This means that money should with open hand and willing mind be lent to our brothers, and without a charge for interest, but here Philo holds sharply to the original text: he makes the law apply only to brother Jews. The reasons for not lending on interest are that the recipient's gratitude is adequate interest, and that the lender will also have gained in kindness, public spirit (*κοινωνία*), magnanimity, a fine

reputation, and glory, and will have built up virtue in his own soul.⁵¹ Another passage makes it seem all the more likely that Philo had no intention of applying to gentiles this reasoning about interest.⁵²

In the fine Biblical commands to be kind to aliens, the word “sojourners” (**גַּזְעִים**) was translated in the Septuagint προσήλυτοι, or possibly, in Philo’s text the equivalent ἐπήλυται, but which Philo interpreted in the new sense of “proselytes.”⁵³ That is, Philo makes the law apply to those who had left polytheism and come “by a beautiful migration” to the worship of the true God. The law means, then, that proselytes are not to be distinguished against in Jewish society: the general obligation of kindness to one’s gentile neighbor, which the Torah certainly intended, has been explained away. The law that the Israelites shall not curse the Egyptian since the Egyptian allowed the Jew to dwell in his land⁵⁴ is one which Philo says goes beyond the limits of equity. There is a sharp contemporary ring in his treatment of the problem. The Egyptians have never ceased, he says, to heap new inhumanities upon old ones. Philo interprets the law with no generalization for treating the vile and spiteful Egyptians with love. He says that if an Egyptian wants to be converted to Judaism he is not to be treated as an enemy, but at the third generation he is to be allowed to attend the synagogue and hear the Scriptures.⁵⁵ The Biblical command gave admission into the *temple* to the third generation. By making it admission to the synagogue Philo has practi-

cally excluded Egyptian converts. He obviously did not want them.

Philo's lack of ethical idealism and passion is felt no less by a Talmudist than by a follower of Jesus. There has been a good deal of remark upon Philo's ethics, but little close study of it. Geiger has recognized that Philo's loyalty to the Jewish group made him unable to do more than lip service to the Stoic ideal of humanity,⁵⁶ while long ago one of the most penetrating students of Philo, Z. Frankel the Talmudist, pointed out the inferiority of Philo's Jewish particularism to the general humanitarianism of the Talmudic tradition itself.⁵⁷ In treating Philo's ethics É. Bréhier⁵⁸ has, as so often, indicated Philo's basic contribution. This contribution was not a finer ethical code, or deep ethical penetration, but the association of the higher mind of man with immediate apprehension of eternal Right, the Law of Nature, by whatever term it might be called, the result of which was that the higher mind became conscience for the first time in Philo. In bringing out this point it seems to me that Bréhier has been less than just to the inwardness of Stoic ethic, which Geiger brought out, and which had gone a long way toward conscience, while he has quite disregarded, and Geiger after him, the still greater subjectivity of Pythagorean ethic with which Philo seems to me most closely akin. But Philo does show the identity of the guiding law of human conduct with the guiding and ultimate datum of mystical experience, the Logos, in a way which seems to me the product of hellenistic Judaism. For here

the sense of the ethical absolute and imperative which the Jew had from the Torah gave even his mystical thinking a concreteness and vividness which pagan aspiration for conformity to the Law of Nature had lacked, and which it had to have before the higher mind could become what we, and Philo, call conscience. Still, Philo's basic desire was primarily for inner adjustment, inner harmony, inner victory, and only secondarily for social righteousness. Philo's political activity for Jews must not confuse us on the fact that his ethics came from a rapidly growing ascetic view of society, in which external problems were fading into insignificance as the problems of a man within himself, and of man with God, increasingly monopolized attention. It was no accident that as the Christians became increasingly hellenized, more developed in their power to spiritualize and formalize their religious experience, more responsive to the ethical ideals of the hellenistic world, Christian ethic quickly became increasingly a matter of the inner man, personal salvation, inner beauty expressed, to be sure, in deeds of kindness, and less a passion for social justice, or impulse to basic and general humanitarianism.

NOTES—CHAPTER VI

1. *Heres*, 235.

2. *Sacr.*, 49.

3. *Cher.*, 113 f.

4. It is the higher mind in a parallel passage, *Ebr.*, 101; cf. 144.

5. The identity of *πνεῦμα* and *λόγος* in this sense is made very clear in *Opif.*, 135, 139. The *πνεῦμα* is elaborately the higher mind, the presence of God, in contrast to the "mind which was made out of matter" in *LA*, i, 36–42. See also *Det.*, 83.

6. Rom. viii, 6, 7.
7. Rom. x, 3.
8. This must be emphasized because Völker has quite misunderstood Philo's ἀρετή to be obedience to law and hence obedience to the Jewish code. Philo's position is traditionally Greek, for with Aristotle ἀρετή is a ἔξις: *Eth. Nic.*, II, 1106a11–1107a27.
9. *Gig.*, 44.
10. *Post.*, 132–157.
11. *LA*, i, 59 and frequently elsewhere. See Leisegang's *Index*, 109, §4.
12. *LA*, i, 65.
13. *LA*, i, 45–52. Christianity soon used this same contrast in rejecting the righteousness of Jewish legalism.
14. *Spec.*, iv, 147.
15. *Abr.*, 270.
16. *LA*, i, 56–58.
17. See my *By Light, Light*, 403–413.
18. *Decal.*, 108–110.
19. *Virt.*, 209. F. Geiger, *Philon von Alexandreia als sozialer Denker* (Stuttgart, 1932), 75, n. 256 compares this especially with Aristotle.
20. *Immut.*, 64.
21. *Virt.*, 51.
22. *Virt.*, 173.
23. *Spec.*, ii, 67 f.
24. *Spec.*, ii, 90 f.
25. *Spec.*, ii, 123.
26. *Spec.*, iii, 137–141.
27. *Spec.*, iii, 143. This statement of Philo has a definite precedent in Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.*, V, 1134b9 ff.: "Injustice cannot exist in a man's relations with what is absolutely his own, like a slave or a child (until the child has reached a certain age and become an independent being), since these are parts of the man himself, and no one chooses deliberately to injure himself" (αὐτὸν . . . βλάπτει = Philo's ἔαντὸν βλάπτει).
28. *Spec.*, iii, 184–204.
29. *Som.*, ii, 294 f.
30. *LA*, iii, 201 f.
31. *Virt.*, 121–124; cf., on humanity to animals, 125–147; and, on humanity to the vegetable world, 148–160.
32. Geiger, pp. 42 f.
33. *Spec.*, ii, 124.
34. *Spec.*, i, 200.
35. *Jurisprudence*, 130 f.

36. *Spec.*, iii, 113.
37. *Spec.*, iii, 30.
38. *Spec.*, iii, 35.
39. *Jurisprudence*, 98; *Spec.*, iii, 79–82.
40. See Geiger, pp. 44–46.
41. *Jurisprudence*, 115 f.; Geiger, pp. 46–49.
42. *Spec.*, iii, 181–183.
43. *Jurisprudence*, 135–142.
44. *Virt.*, 109–114, 150–154.
45. *Virt.*, 120.
46. *Spec.*, ii, 107.
47. *Mut.*, 50.
48. *Mut.*, 225.
49. Geiger, pp. 30 f., has a fine collection of passages to this point.
50. *Spec.*, iv, 74; cf. *Virt.*, 166–174.
51. *Virt.*, 88, 84. See Geiger, pp. 32–35.
52. *Spec.*, ii, 122–123.
53. Lev. xix, 33, 34. Deut. x, 19. *Virt.*, 102–104. This may have been a general contemporary change for which Philo himself was not responsible. The Hebrew root took on the meaning “proselytize” in Aramaic (see Brown, Driver, and Briggs, s.v. *נַשְׁׂאָה*).
54. Deut. xxiii, 7, 8.
55. *Virt.*, 105–108.
56. *Op. cit.*, 112 f.
57. In his essay, still the best on Philo's ethics: “Zur Ethik des jüdisch-alexandrinischen Philosophen Philo,” *Monatsschrift für die Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*, XVI (1867), 241–252, 281–297.
58. *Les Idées philosophiques et religieuses de Philon d'Alexandrie* (Paris, 1908 or 1925), 251, 296–310.

CHAPTER VII

THE MYSTIC

WE have seen that to Philo the real was the immaterial, and that life for society and the individual alike took on reality in proportion as it became more filled with and imitative of the immaterial. To this conclusion Plato had come. The next question which the man, if not the philosopher, must immediately ask is how we are to make more vital and conscious our relation with immaterial reality. To this all Philo's philosophical remarks are subordinated. It was pointed out that he was not interested in philosophy as an end in itself. His philosophical position is not elaborated with such an interest in producing a coherent account as we associate with philosophers, but must be pieced together from disjointed and passing allusions which frequently contradict each other. The reality of the immaterial, the relative unreality of the material, this is assumed but not argued or made into a system. God and the Powers are described occasionally, but not coördinated with theories of creation. What interests Philo is not the demonstration that the immaterial is the only reality, but religious experience of that reality. If man's higher mind must somehow win the struggle against the lower members, and orient man in God and not in the world, how is this to be accomplished?

Plato's answer had been that the only hope was

correct education. The uneducable mass would be trained in useful tasks and in compliance to the guidance of the community's better minds. The intelligent minority would be given a most comprehensive discipline in the sciences of the day, particularly in mathematics; this would be succeeded by a rigid questioning of all hypotheses, until to some there would come a higher flash of perception which revealed the world of forms, and ultimately the supreme form from which all lesser forms subtended. People with such insight would then learn from experience in state and army to integrate their higher knowledge with social life, and to those who coupled the supreme vision with marked skill in practical adjustments would be committed responsibility for the state.

Philo often reveals that up to a point this program was still unchallenged, at least to the extent that the exact sciences were the proper introduction to metaphysics, and that for the ordinary man who could not hope to have the higher vision the guide was the formal precept of law. Again and again he stresses the value of the encyclical studies; that is, the scientific education of the day.¹ All men except such as Isaac and Moses must begin with them. From them we get not only preparation for true knowledge, but also a rudimentary and highly valuable introduction to the virtues: grammar leads to *vόνσις*, knowledge: music to rhythm and concord; mathematics to justice; rhetoric and dialectic to true perception and deduction.² But these studies are milk for spiritual babes,³ and are good, like childhood itself, only as a stage to pass

through. When one remains in them, one remains in the material, since all these studies are based upon sensory observations, and hence they are earthly, not heavenly.⁴ With the school discipline the soul cannot mate in the full sense: repeatedly Philo brings in the allegory of Abraham who first has relations with his concubine, Hagar, the introductory studies, and produces Ishmael, the sophist or pedagogue.⁵ The fact is that these must be banished when the soul rises to appropriation of the true knowledge and virtue, as Ishmael and Hagar had to be sent out from the presence of the fully developed Abraham and Sarah. Sarah, heavenly Sophia or Wisdom, has herself urged Hagar, the school studies, upon Abraham in the early stages, but Abraham must later divorce her if he is to come into the higher life. Philo seems to me to be saying in his figurative way what we have been saying very much to each other during the last twenty years, that attention to, and development of, scientific knowledge is no guaranty, to say the least, of increase in our spiritual growth or perception. Plato had still unbounded faith that a study of mathematics and astronomy would lead any properly endowed person to perceive the spiritual realities of justice, courage, beauty, and the good. In the centuries between Plato and Philo, when the greatest flowering of exact science occurred which the world ever saw until very recent times, the "pure" mathematician or physicist had first appeared; that is, the man who gives his life to study everything about mathematics or physics except their spiritual implications. And I am sure that

Philo was again putting into Judaism a protest which was widespread among Greeks, that, for the development of the soul, studies which could be of great introductory value become impediments when they are made ends in themselves. The hellenistic world had no spiritual leaders among its scientists, and the cleft between religion and science had begun. A century after Philo, Justin Martyr, who was still looking for Truth from philosophic schools, found that the Pythagoreans were continuing to insist upon the encyclical studies for admission to their group, but that the Platonists had abandoned such prerequisite altogether. Plato's program had proved itself a fallacy. The seduction of material things is no less for the scientist than for the sybarite, though in so different a form. Factual knowledge, even factual ingenuity, must still be Hagar to Abraham. The great soul which finds reality must be more than a scholar.

The failure of the hellenistic scientist to be a spiritual leader resulted, I have said, in the beginning of the chasm between religion and science. In spite of the fact that Philo still knew and loved science, he belongs with the religious group. In the hellenistic world something momentous had occurred, of which we can see only the result, since records of the process itself are lost. The dream of ordinary men was taken into philosophic religion, the dream of revelation and of the possibility of assimilating man with the immaterial by means of God-given sacraments. The pure philosophers seem to have kept to the abstract idea rather than the concrete rite. The philosophers sought

to experience the immaterial immediately in a process of contemplation, by which the material aspect of man faded into insignificance, then into complete non-entity, as the liberated soul rose, the pure into the Pure. To Plotinus a century and a half after Philo, this was sufficient: objective revelations, myths, and sacraments played no part, apparently, in his life. We have no record that any people in Philo's time contented themselves with so abstract an approach to reality, though some of the Neo-Pythagorean fragments may have come from men of such a type. It is safe to assume that Plutarch, a few years after Philo, was more generally typical of his own and of Philo's generation, just as he was more typical of Plotinus' own contemporaries: for he supplemented the purely abstract with a philosophic interpretation of the Mystery Religions and their rites, so that one did not go out alone into the Alone, but was led into the eternal by Isis, Dionysus, or some other saving god, as one was initiated and shared in the celebrations. The saving god was himself, or herself, for that purpose identified with the philosophical Logos or Sophia. This was the paganism which Julian the Apostate tried to keep alive. Plato had thought that his philosophy was a mystery in the truest sense, the thing toward which the popular mysteries were groping. His experience of apprehending immaterial reality was not a "figurative" mystery but the only true mystery, compared with which "carrying the thyrsus" was in itself a meaningless farce. Many other philosophers had apparently the same notion. The people of

the hellenistic age, who had failed to discover, like Plato, immaterial reality through scientific discipline, had combined the Platonic mystery with the popular mystery: by allegory they made the myths of the gods into cryptic revelations of metaphysical reality, and the ceremonies into sacraments of the immaterial.

The myth vivified the abstract by personalizing it, so that the coming of Dionysus or Osiris was the coming of the Logos or Sophia in its immaterial power. The rites presented the acts and sufferings of the saving god in such a way that through the rite the initiate might take the divine Stream into himself in a convincing way. Dialectic had been too hard a road. The revelation and impartation of eternal reality through a personal saving deity and mystic rite took the place of dialectic to attain an end which was still described in Platonic terms. Of course every initiate into Isis or Dionysus did not understand in it what Plutarch did. The contrast between the immediately magical and the truly mystical was, apparently, from our divergent sources, as great in those days as it has always been on the varied levels of mystic perception in the taking of Christian sacraments. Yet, for high or low in perception, the eternal was made accessible in mystic rite.

The Græco-Roman world became fascinated with this conception. Men looked everywhere for new myths, new to them but, if they were to have any value, age old in their original homes, because it was believed that the truth about the eternally real was contained in the stories the ancients had taught their children,

if only men could understand the stories; that is, allegorize them, correctly. Story, allegorized, and religious rite, also allegorized, went together. Out of them, and through them, man could get that measure of the eternally true immateriality which would enoble life and banish any significance from death. This was true mystery in the ancient world for thoughtful men. Some, I have said, could get on without rites altogether; most of them needed the rites, the myths, and the saviors. But from Plato to Proclus, for thoughtful men "true" mystery was the miraculous elevation of the soul through its assimilation of and by the immaterial, though most men needed the myth and the rite to assist in the great transition, and though for probably the great majority what was found was not the "immortal" but only the superhuman. The term "mystery" became as multifarious in its ancient usage as the term "science" today. Yet this meaning I have defined seems the common denominator in all its applications.⁶

To a Jew as impressed by Greek ideas as was Philo, this conception of mystery appealed with irresistible force. Associated from ancient times with philosophy, for all its old and continuous use for pagan rites which the Jews detested, the idea of mystery belonged to no specific rites. It was being freely associated in Philo's day with new importations, and had become a type of thought which was quite as transferable to Judaism as to any other traditional religion. The basic elements in the transformation of a traditional myth and cultus into a mystery were twofold: the tradi-

tional myth was allegorized into a story of the saving approach of divinity to humanity, of the breaking down by divine act of the barrier between the immaterial and the material; the traditional rite became a representation in matter of the divine life and being, so that immaterial reality, the only true reality, became accessible for man increasingly to appropriate it. Philo and his group could make this same transformation in Judaism without ever once violating the principle of differentiation between Jews and pagans, the refusal of the Jew to share in pagan rites. He could, as we have seen, accept the whole idea of kingship, the king a superhuman being linking man and God, could insist that Moses had taught the doctrine, that Moses and Joseph had exemplified it as no pagan had done, so long as the Jew did not have to share in the pagan cultus of the king. Similarly he could accept the idea that man's salvation was the mystic approach to immaterial reality so long as he could scorn the pagan mystic rites and saviors, and demonstrate that the true mystery had been revealed by Moses in both cryptic story and Jewish rite. And this, I am convinced, was the contribution to Judaism which Philo and his group were most concerned to make. We have seen that his native Jewish heritage was so strong that this new explanation of Judaism never could replace the old, or make, over against the old, a grim dilemma for him. But he takes his loyalty to Jewish law and people for granted; the Jewish God the Father of Mercy comes into his writings much more as the emergence of an assumption which has

been with him from childhood than as something which he feels called upon to demonstrate. Philo's thesis throughout the allegories is that the deeper understanding of Judaism is not the literal and material but the mystical. Vastly more profound and more imaginative than Plutarch, he is trying like the Greeks to show that traditional legend and rite have their true meaning only when they are made a typological revelation of the mystic path from man to God.

The transformation of story and that of rite must be considered separately.

The transformation of story was done through the technique of the mystic philosophers. For pagans, story became typology when Isis became the Female Principle in Nature, the yearning and fructifying principle in divinity; when Dionysus or Hermes became that aspect of immaterial divinity, the Logos, which radiated out from God to man and the material world. Stoic allegory reduced the gods of Olympus into air, earth, water, scientific elements: mystic allegory made the heroes and divinities into links between God and man. Philo shows the influence of all these tendencies. The furniture of the tabernacle became cosmic elements and astral bodies, but the personalities of the Torah were to him men and women who had transcended human nature and who became the Logos and Sophia.

For the basis of the Jewish Mystery as Philo presents it is the peculiar interpretation he offers of the careers of the Patriarchs, especially of Abraham,

Isaac, and Jacob, and, beyond them, of Moses. Philo insisted that these had come through with the help of the Powers to the end of the mystic Road, and had been given the final vision of Reality. As such they not only were themselves holy but constituted a "royal priesthood," which means that they have the priestly power to bring others up into their own experience.

Abraham migrated from Chaldea, Philo explains, when he rejected the philosophy which made the material world the ultimate form of existence. In a new land, Charan, he thus began to study the world afresh, and quickly concluded that there must be a mind behind the material universe as there is a mind behind the material aspects of man. When he got this conception God could then take the first step in revelation. This first revelation was the empowering of Abraham's mind to run up and apprehend a nature or existence quite beyond matter, to apprehend even the Being who was beyond both material and immaterial natures and who had created both. As a result of this Abraham's name was changed to indicate that he had become the Sage, the ideal man of antiquity. Abraham was now ready for the next step, which was union with Sophia or Virtue, presented quite as a mythological figure and represented in the story by Sarah. In the early experience Abraham united with Sarah or Sophia in such a way that she was masculine and he feminine; that is, he had thus far purified his soul from wrong conceptions, had apprehended the basic truth, and was ready for union with it. The first union had to be the giving to Abraham of poten-

cies, so he played the feminine or receptive role in the union. This is an introduction into Jewish thought of one of the most abstruse and typically pagan of the mystic conceptions which is much elaborated for Isis and in the Orphic hymns. It goes far back in Egyptian speculation, when very early God was represented as hermaphroditic. Sophia, the Light-Stream from God which could for other purposes be called Logos, comes here to man to scatter seeds in him of divine life and power, the experience which could also, by a variation of the figure, be called a rebirth, since it resulted in the birth of a new personality.

When the three men came to visit Abraham at Mamre the experience was that of Abraham's coming at last to a vision of the three Powers just under God himself, the Logos and the two Powers of Creation and Rulership. To the beginner these three appear as three, but to Abraham they could appear as one, since, we saw in an earlier chapter, they are really one in the Logos: the two have no independent existence apart from the Logos. After the departure of these heavenly guests Abraham had intercourse with Sarah with new potency, for he was now masculine since he had the divine seeds within him; he begat the perfect Isaac. It is apparent that Abraham went to the top of mystical experience, had the power to be masculine, to beget, with Sarah or Sophia. The result was that for the purpose of allegory Isaac was a child of God, not of the man Abraham, and was born of the eternal Virgin, Sophia or Virtue. This is the achievement possible for the man who has gone all the way in

spiritual development. He begets not pedagogues, masters of science, as he had begotten earlier in his education Ishmael by Hagar, but he begat the Son of God by heavenly Sophia or Wisdom or Virtue, for he was now mystically at one with the Logos.

God spoke to him "no longer as to a human being." He had become the "Animate Law," the "physician of our race, truly its guardian and the one who drives evil out from it."⁷ He is "the savior of the race, the intercessor before God, the one who seeks pardon for the sins of those akin to him."⁸

What has happened to the story of Abraham? From a saga of the founding of the Jewish race it has become a myth of the mystic hero and savior, as keenly the prerogative of Judaism as ever, but now the Jewish Mystic Savior.

Jewish mystic thought is not, however, centered uniquely in Abraham as the Dionysiac mystery had, *perhaps*, earlier been centered in Dionysus, and as Christian salvation was later centered indeed in Christ. The tendency of the day, let me repeat, was for variety of mystic presentation, a number of saviors rather than a single one, all of whom were united in a single philosophy or idea, in terms of which their stories alone had meaning. So Philo saw the drama of salvation presented in Isaac, Jacob, and even more in Moses, as well as in Abraham.

Isaac,⁹ the product of this ideal union, represented from the first a perfect being who had no need of the earlier stages of development by which Abraham was perfected. "Moses," says Philo, "represents that

Sarah conceived at that time when God visited her in her solitude¹⁰ and yet brought forth, not to the One who made the visitation, but to the man who aspires to achieve Sophia, whose name is Abraham.”¹¹ It was “the Lord who begat Isaac,” and as a result Isaac was not “a human being, but . . . the unprojected son of God who gives him to souls that are entirely devoted to peace as a soothing and comforting presence.”¹² So Isaac dispensed with the instruction of men, became the “self-taught”; “the self-taught genus is a new entity, one greater than reason and truly divine, and it subsists not by virtue of human ratiocination, but by divine madness.”¹³ Accordingly God taught Abraham but begat Isaac, gave one the rank of pupil, the other that of son.

Born thus perfect from the beginning Isaac was useful to Philo chiefly to represent that highest of all mystical experiences in terms of the Mystic Marriage. The incident of the sacrifice of Isaac is lost to us, though Philo must have made much of it. Philo’s whole treatise *On Isaac* is gone, as well as those parts of the *Questions and Answers* which treated the incident. But fortunately the section of the *Questions*¹⁴ is preserved where Philo discusses the marriage of Isaac, and this is one of the most amazing and important sections in Philo. Rebecca is, like Sarah, Virtue or Sophia interchangeably, and is clearly the “Female Principle” which Plutarch and the Orphic Hymns show was very important in mystic aspiration. She is so exalted a figure that her bracelets are

sufficient to represent the entire cosmos which the immaterial Stream of God similarly wears. When she gives the servant to drink at the well it is the Logos itself which he receives. When she starts on the journey to Isaac, Philo exclaims:

Open thy spiritual eyes, O Mind, and behold him who is thy example, Isaac, Laughter free from sadness: he rejoices uninterrupted and continually beyond all things made by God. For thou shalt see him preserved from indiscriminate and turbulent thoughts, making his way with no uncertain steps to Sophia, who is immune from great evils, from ignorance and disorder. See him in true and proper way entering into converse with Sophia at the well, that is, at the marvelous and divine fount which is called the fount of Vision.¹⁵

Rebecca-Sophia approaches Isaac who has gone out in the evening to meditate in the field; that is, he has left visible things and gone out "to live a solitary life with the invisible God."¹⁶ The fact that it was evening means that the light of his human mind had set. Rebecca comes to him, and gets down from her camel as Sophia comes down to the mystic. She is veiled as are the inner secrets of the Mystery. At last they are united in the wedding chamber, which is itself the house of Sarah, also the type of Sophia, and here Isaac is united with the eternal Virgin, "from whose love," Philo prays, "may I never cease." Now Isaac is consoled for the loss of his mother, for in Rebecca he has found Sophia again, not as an old woman, but as one who is eternally young in incorporeal beauty.

The age-old dream of Egypt has been realized. Egyptians had for thousands of years been dreaming of salvation given by the great god who was the Bull of his mother. Now in Rebecca the same idea is expressed with a beauty which seems to me profoundly moving. Again the soul is reborn by union with its own mother. This is not madness. It is the cry of the soul to be at one with the greater thing from which it has come, to unite itself with the universal spirit which for all its cosmic and hypercosmic motherhood is eternally virgin. For sexual as are the experience and language, the soul has become united with something whose own essential superiority to union can be expressed only by assertions of its eternal virginity. I have tried to put into a paragraph many pages of Philo whose passion and beauty cannot be transcribed.

In this experience Isaac has become the God-bearer (*deifer* = θεοφόρος); that is, the incarnation of deity. He is almost wholly possessed by God. "And at the same time, O Mind, he is thy example!"

The experience of Jacob is likewise preserved unsatisfactorily, since Philo's *On Jacob* is also lost. But the career of Jacob is much more like that of Abraham than that of Isaac. His escape from Essau, his preliminary experience in the dream at Bethel, his long periods of service for first one wife and then another, then his escape and final triumph when he gets the stamp of God upon him in the great wrestling match—this is, like Abraham's story, all a story of renunciation of the flesh, gradual training, and successive stages of progress, until Jacob is finally given

the culminating experience of union with God. Into the details of those experiences we need not go.¹⁷

Moses was the one to whom Philo most usually looked for the pattern of the ideal man and savior.¹⁸

When God lent Moses to earthly things and permitted him to associate with them, God endowed him not at all with the ordinary virtue of a ruler or king with which forcibly to rule the soul's passions ; rather he appointed him to be god, and decreed that the whole bodily realm and its leader, the mind, should be his subjects and slaves.

Moses' incarnation was typified by his being in the ark of bulrushes, where, when he wept, he wept for his imprisonment, and for all others so shut in, so much did he long for immaterial nature. For Moses was excellent in the highest sense at his very birth.¹⁹ He was a stranger in the body.²⁰ He knew all things from the beginning.

So he was thought worthy of a royal upbringing and training, and did not, like a mere child, delight in teasing, in laughing, and in other childish amusements, . . . but modestly and with dignity he addressed himself to what he could see and hear that would benefit his soul. From the first, various teachers came from different countries, some on their own accord from the neighbouring districts and the sections of Egypt, some brought over from Greece by large fees. In no great time, by the fine endowment of his nature, he had surpassed the powers of these teachers, for he anticipated their instruction and seemed to be using recollection rather than to be learning new things ; and he went on quite by him-

self to penetrate into what was obscure. For great natures make many fresh contributions to knowledge.²¹

Naturally, says Philo, those who beheld him were astonished at such a novel spectacle, and asked themselves "what sort of mind this was that inhabited his body . . . whether it was human or divine or a mixture of the two, for he had no resemblance to ordinary men."²²

The various experiences of Moses, then, are incidents, not stages of development. His marriage was, like the marriage of Isaac, union with Sophia, and again the identity of that union with the union of God and Sophia is brought out, this time by the statement that, when Moses married, his wife was already pregnant from God.²³ The experience at the burning bush has various explanations in Philo, but seems basically a revelation that God, who is himself pure Being, "I am," reveals himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; that is, in the three Powers. Moses is unable himself to speak, and needs Aaron for spokesman, because Moses is the Logos in its higher reaches, before it is differentiated into specific utterances. This man can now return to Egypt, not to fight material forces within himself, but to act as the savior and hierophant of his people. This function Moses performed when he led the Israelites out of Egypt, an experience which becomes the most usual symbol of the Jewish Mystery since the migration was from Egypt, matter, to the Promised Land, the immaterial, under the saving leadership of Moses. In

other words, the career of Moses is not so much the career of one who, like Abraham and Jacob, had the experience of development which we may reproduce, but was the career of the savior of men who, given to them as a special loan from God, can lead them out of the world to the apprehension of God. For the mystic experience of men consists in "going up to the aethereal heights with their reasonings, setting before them Moses, the type of existence beloved by God, to lead them on their way."²⁴ So for gentiles in the *Life of Moses* Moses is described in terms of the king-savior conception of the day: he is the perfect king, law-maker, priest, and prophet. Moses' kingship was cosmic:

For as God thought Moses worthy to share in the portion he had reserved for himself, he committed to Moses the entire cosmos as a possession fit for God's heir. Wherefore each of the elements was made subject to Moses as master and altered its inherent properties to become subject to his commands.²⁵

Did Moses not enjoy the benefit of a still greater communion with the Father and Creator of all things in that he was deemed worthy of the same appellation? For he was called God and King of the whole race. And he is said to have "entered into the darkness where God was" (Exodus xx.21), that is into the unseen and invisible substance which is the immaterial model of all things, and to have apprehended things never revealed to mortal nature. And he put himself and his life forward into the middle like a well executed sketch, thus setting forth an extremely beautiful and divinely formed object as a model for those who wish to copy it. And happy are

they who have stamped this image upon their own souls, or who have even tried to do so.²⁶

On Sinai Moses went closer than any other man to a vision of God in his essence. Philo's passages here are quite ecstatic. Moses was an incorporeal listener to the divine music of the cosmos. His soul became a lyre in such perfect attunement that as he plucked the strings he produced the most beautiful of all symphonies, the symphony of a life in which ideal virtues are perfectly expressed in actions. He entered into the darkness where God is, and

there he abides while he is made perfect in the most sacred Mysteries. And he not only becomes an initiate but also the hierophant of the rites and teacher of divine things, which he will reveal to those whose ears have been purified. With him then the divine Spirit that leads along every right Road abides.²⁷

While he was there Moses experienced the second birth, which we have already seen Philo usually put in the future life. This second birth, Philo says, was

better than the first; for the first birth took place in the flesh and had corruptible parents, while the second birth was unmixed and simple, had its seat in the soul which was changed from begotten to unbegotten; and it has no mother, but only a Father, who is also Father of the universe. Wherefore the "calling up," or, as we called it, the divine birth, made him eternally virgin like the nature of the seven. He was called up on the seventh day and differed in this from the protoplast. For the protoplast (created on the sixth day) was made out of earth

and had a body. But Moses (called up on the seventh day) was without body.²⁸

Philo is so carried away by the exalted Moses that he frequently speaks of him as having been deified, or being God. "For when he had left all mortal categories behind he was changed into divinity (*transmutatur in divinum*), so that he might be made akin to God and truly divine (*ita ut fiat deo cognatus vereque divinus*)."²⁹ Philo vacillates on this point, but the fact that he could make such a statement as this is highly significant.³⁰

Philo describes the death of Moses most interestingly. When Moses had gone up alone to the place of his death, Philo says,

he gathered together a divine company, that is the elements of the universe and the most important parts of the cosmos, namely earth and heaven, earth the hearth of mortals and heaven the house of immortals. In the midst of these he composed hymns in every type of mode and interval, in order that men and ministering angels might hear, men as learners that he might teach them a similarly grateful attitude, and the angels as critics to watch how, judged by their own technique, he made not a single false note. The angels would also be strengthened in their faith if a man clothed in his mortal body could have a power of song like the sun, the moon, and the sacred choir of the other stars, and could attune his soul to the divine musical instrument, namely the heaven and the whole cosmos. But Moses the hierophant, when he had taken his place in the aether, mingled, along with the choral hymns of praise to God, true emotions of

good will to the Nation. He reproved them for their past sins, gave them warnings and corrections for the present, and advice for the future based upon good hopes which were bound to be fulfilled.³¹

When Moses had finished the song he began to be changed

from mortal existence to immortal life, and noticed that he was gradually being disengaged from the elements with which he had been mixed. He shed his body which grew around him like the shell of an oyster,³² while his soul which was thus laid bare desired its migration thence.³³

The function of this supreme character was, as I have said, to be the mystic hierophant to lead men into the true Mysteries. Philo prays to Moses:

O thou hierophant, though the eyes of our soul are closed because we do not desire to see, or cannot do so, still do thou uphold us and help us and not cease to anoint us until thou hast initiated us into the hidden meaning of the sacred utterances and revealed those locked beauties that are invisible to the uninitiated. This it is meet for thee to do.³⁴

Moses' power to lead men into this mystic apprehension is not just official, a duty assigned to a man, but is the result of Moses' own supreme character, his being actually a link between man and deity. The first man, says Philo,

brings everything he has into the common stock and gives it without stint for the benefit of those who will use it: what he himself lacks he asks from God who

alone has unlimited wealth. God thereupon opens up the heavenly treasure, and pours down a torrent of good things like rain and snow, so that all the earthly channels are filled to overflowing. And God is accustomed to give these things and not turn away from his own suppliant Logos. For when Moses on one occasion besought him as a suppliant, it is recorded ; "I am compassionate upon them according to thy word."³⁵

That is, Moses is here the Logos of God, as he frequently is elsewhere.³⁶ Moses is not unique in this, for this very passage goes on to show that the prayer of Abraham was quite as effective, and it is properly the whole body of the Patriarchs who are the Suppliant Logos of the Jewish Mystery. But it is quite typical that after commenting upon the Patriarchs as a group, Philo adds :

Ye initiates, whose ears have been purified, receive these things as the truly sacred Mysteries into your souls and babble them not to the uninitiated, but guard them as a treasure which you share among yourselves. Gold and silver, corruptible substances, are not stored therein, but the finest of the true possessions, knowledge of the Cause, and of Virtue, and of that Third which is begotten of these. If ye meet with any of the initiated press him closely and cling to him lest he conceal from you some newer Mystery. Cling to him until ye have mastered it clearly. For I myself have been initiated by the God-beloved Moses into the Greater Mysteries.³⁷

That is, all the gifts of the Patriarchs were supremely represented in Moses, so that ordinary men learn from Moses as Moses learned from God.³⁸

What Moses has done is twofold. In the code of laws he has given ordinary men a guide for life which is a direct reflection or codification of immaterial reality, Natural Law. This corresponds to the regeneration of the lower classes in Plato's *Republic*. But for the Mystics who can perceive the higher message, Moses has revealed the path from matter to the immaterial, and stands ready to lead them up that path.

In the story of the migration Philo should logically have made the consummation the arrival in the Promised Land. But this he did not do, and the reason, I suspect, is because this was a step which the Israelites took beyond the leadership of Moses. If Moses was the hierophant, it would be extremely embarrassing to have the initiate go beyond the hierophant in attainment. So the formulation is that the Jews, when in Egypt, represent man in the body. Egypt is the material world. From it men escape to find the immaterial. Under Moses the Israelites moved out, and in the Red Sea the Israelites escaped while the Egyptians, the material element, were drowned. This is the first stage, corresponding, as I have already indicated, to the stage described by Paul as "buried with Christ" in baptism, or death with Christ on the cross, the crucifixion or destruction of the lower parts of our constitution. Freed from bodily entanglement, the soul or dominant mind can now go on the long road to positive achievement. The achievement comes in two stages or formulations, the first what I have described as the Mystery of Aaron, a formula-

tion in which the soul seems to become cosmic through the mystic symbolism of the Aaronic tabernacle. For brief presentation of Philo's mystic thinking this aspect must here be left out altogether, important as it was for Philo.³⁹ Finally, after a series of minor stages of progress, the Israelites come to a peculiar scene at the Well where Moses at last initiates them into Sophia and the Powers.⁴⁰ The struggles of the tribe during the long years in the desert, their alternation of victories and blessings with defeats and punishments, is the picture of the ordinary life of a Mystic who, though he may have left Egypt and passed the Red Sea, actually must live without the final consummation, and alternate between exultation and depression, though always Moses the Savior is at hand to help and guide.

In the discussion of Philo's doctrine of man it was pointed out that he, like Paul, did not think that the height of achievement in this life was disembodied excellency. However much a man may have crucified his body with Christ, or drowned it in the Red Sea, still he finds afterwards, like Paul, that the body, dead or alive, is still with him.⁴¹ This later stage is most clearly shown in the account of Abraham, for which we have the fullest records from Philo. After the mystic triumph in the begetting and birth of Isaac, Abraham's body was to him a corpse, as dead as a bronze statue,⁴² which must be suppressed;⁴³ but if properly mastered it could be made as fruitful as the soul,⁴⁴ an idea which seems to me what Paul meant when he was struggling for the "redemption of the

body." In presenting the life of Abraham for gentiles Philo uses all the closing incidents of Abraham's career to show how now after his mystical triumph he was able to manifest to his fellow men the four Greek virtues, justice, courage, self-control, and wisdom.

The Mystery was not, then, a permanent escape from the flesh, often as Philo, carried away for the moment, seems to present it as an end in itself. It could and must fructify in ideal ethical conduct. But ideal ethical conduct was so inevitable a result of the complete experience, so automatic, that Philo's attention is much more turned to the mystic problem, the winning through to complete victory, than to ethics themselves. In this Philo is not unique. All the virtues would be his when he reached the end of the mystic Road: his task was to push on and on in the wilderness of struggle, fed by the manna, watered by streams of Sophia which Moses evoked for him on the way, looking always to his Captain and Leader, and meanwhile doing as well as he could in his life with other men.

What had this mystic view of life to do with Judaism? It was Jewish, for Philo, in every particular. True the whole formulation of escape from matter to the immaterial, of higher knowledge, mystic union with potencies or the Sophia from God, were all foreign to any natural meaning in his Bible, and came to him and his group directly from the pagans about him. But Jews felt that though the pagans had asked the right questions about how man was to come to the higher Reality, still the pagan answers were nonsense.

Judaism had the true answer, and Judaism alone. The Bible itself had the whole story, not only of God and the Logos, the preëminence of the immaterial over the material, but the story of how man was to win through to the higher Reality; and the Bible revealed the true mystagogues, Moses and the Patriarchs, who could still personally show man the way. In his Mysticism Philo seemed to himself, and represented to his readers both Jew and Greek, that he was going not out of Judaism but only deeper into it. He scorned the myths of the pagans, and their saving deities, because they were false as over against the true ones in the Bible. Plato, I repeat, had scorned those who merely "carried the thyrsus" because they thought that thereby they were true Bacchi, when it was philosophy which was the true Mystery in that it could alone lead the soul to the immaterial.⁴⁵ So Philo scorned the pagan Mysteries because his was the true Mystery revealed by God.

Did Philo scorn the pagan rites because he had, beside the perfect mystic philosophy, also the true mystic rites? In my *By Light, Light* I devoted only a few pages to the question, and came through to the conclusion that an affirmative rather than a negative answer seemed to fit the very fragmentary and passing allusions which were pertinent. But I tried to leave the matter entirely open since it seemed to me, and still does, of much less importance than the great mass of material in which the Mystery is presented as a mystic philosophy which men approach by retirement from the world, rather than through mystic

rites. That ground it is useless to reëxamine here. That mystic Jews had distinct rites of their own, distinct initiations, to which even Jews must be specially admitted, there is no evidence whatever to support. With critics who insisted upon this point of view as over against what they took to be mine I am in complete agreement. But I did err in not seeing that this question would be one of such overwhelming interest to others that it justified them in dismissing my main ideas, and those of Philo, as interesting but not worth serious discussion. The dilemma was stated over and again: Is Philo's Mystery a real mystery or, as an ideological rather than a ritualistic mystery, only a figurative one?

This dilemma seems to me entirely false and misleading, one which, I have already indicated, has come from modern not ancient categories and usage of the term "mystery." There is every reason for supposing, as I stated briefly in a later study,⁴⁶ and as Boyancé⁴⁷ elaborated much more in detail simultaneously, that the word "mystery" was used literally by philosophers for centuries before Philo to indicate the nature and goal of their teachings. Real mystery, let me repeat, seems to me, in ancient usage, to be distinguished as teaching, with or without rites, which would really lead the "initiate" or "disciple" (the two words are synonymous in Philo) out of matter into the eternal. "Figurative" use of the language of Mystery Religions was passing and occasional usage for lesser achievement, as when we "initiate" a young man into the "mysteries" of banking. Did Philo think

he was presenting men with a literal or real mystery in that he was showing them a literal path to the immaterial, one which, if followed, would result in the true achievement of the goal? The answer can only be that he certainly and passionately did think so, did believe that the Patriarchs and Moses uniquely revealed that path and by intercession with God and help to man led human beings along it. With that Philo believed his doctrine, his "higher" Judaism, to be literally Mystery, the only true Mystery.

The question of the use of rites, then, has nothing to do with the reality of Philo's Mystery. But the question of rites remains. A careful reading of Philo's account of the Jewish Festivals will reveal, in my opinion, the answer. It must be recalled that the whole Jewish Mystery was evolved by Philo or, more probably, by his group, through reading the Jewish Scriptures with Greek spectacles; these spectacles projected between the lines of the Bible a whole world of Greek ideology which Philo was convinced belonged on the original page. But he will accept nothing from paganism which he cannot read into the words of Moses. Pagan-saving personalities, Isis, Dionysus, Orpheus, find no admission, and are not needed because their powers are ascribed to the Patriarchs. The story of Abraham and Moses becomes the story of humanity conquering matter, or of the incarnation of a divine helper. Pagans like Plutarch made their own primitive myths into philosophic mysteries in exactly the same way. We should then suspect that if rites were used by Jewish mystics they would be

imported pagan rites no more than the Jewish mystic stories were imported pagan stories. If mystic Judaism made use of rites, it would have used Jewish rites, suffused, indeed transformed, with pagan ideology, but externally as unchanged as was Philo's Pentateuch.

Exactly this proves to be Philo's approach to the Jewish Festivals.

For example, there is no trace of an initiatory rite for Jews into the Mystery. Apprehension and experience of the deeper truth seem to have been sufficient. But for proselytes Philo changes circumcision into a sacrament, an outward sign of a mystic grace. When he explains circumcision to gentiles in the *Exposition*⁴⁸ he gives the traditional reasons for its practice: two reasons have to do with sanitation, and a third with the fact that circumcision facilitates impregnation. The fourth is more fanciful: the rite makes the organ by which animate things are generated resemble the heart in which thoughts are engendered. These traditional and material explanations Philo characteristically keeps with respect. But to them he adds two mystic explanations. In mutilating the organ which is the source and symbol of material pleasure, circumcision becomes a symbol of that renunciation and belittlement of all material pleasure which is the first step in spiritual emancipation. At the same time it pours contempt symbolically upon man's illusion of creative power, since it is this sense of independent power in man which most stands in the way of his mystic achievement. For only, Philo tells us abun-

dantly elsewhere, as man recognizes his own helplessness and unreality apart from God, his complete dependence upon God, can he hope to receive from God. That is, Philo has made circumcision into a mystic rite of abandonment of fleshly desire and confidence, as it is a rite of complete dedication to God. In the same spirit the mystic in Isis or Dionysus would have laid aside old robes and put on new ones to signify his renunciation of the old life and bodily commitments.

The native Jew would have had this experience of the renunciation of the world and dedication to the spirit when he was circumcised in his unconscious infancy. In maturity he would come, like the Christian after infant baptism, into more advanced sacraments. It should be noted in passing that the normative Jewish idea that circumcision is an acceptance of the Mosaic code, assumption of the obligation and heritage of the Jewish people, is not hinted for the gentile in Philo's presentation. Philo did not require circumcision, as a matter of fact, from gentile proselytes at all,⁴⁹ but he here heartily recommends it to them for its symbolic value as dedication to mystic Judaism. "It drives evil opinion from the soul, and all other things which are not dear to God."

Philo has nothing to say about baptism. Whether Jews were using it in Alexandria we do not know, but it was a rite which did not come from the Pentateuch, and Philo has no occasion to mention it. I cannot believe, in view of what he does with all other rites, that if he used it he would not have explained it as a mystic purification from the defilement of matter.

The temple cultus, I have said, was made into a cosmic Mystery by interpreting its courts, symbols, vestments, and ritual in terms of signs of the zodiac and other cosmic phenomena. One cannot read the material Philo has on this subject without the sense that to him the temple service was most literally mystic ritual.

These were, however, not a part of the usual life of the Alexandrian Jew. If mystic ritual was to have any place in his life it had to be in the ritual of the synagogue, ritual which must have centered then as now in the Sabbath worship and the Festivals. It is of the highest importance that Philo finds the real meaning of Sabbath and Festivals not in their commemoration of some events in Jewish history, but in their mystic symbolism. To mention only a few of Philo's "ten" Festivals:

The Sabbath is important because on the day of physical rest the soul is liberated to go into the mystical life ($\betaι\circ\varsigma\ \thetaεωρητικός$).⁵⁰ The New Moon is a cosmic Mystery. The Passover is a symbol of the migration from body to spirit, the purification of the soul.⁵¹ The Unleavened Bread is the "unmixed food which is prepared by Nature"; that is, it is the immaterial, unmixed with matter, which the mystic eats.⁵² The First Fruits, with the leavened cake, are even more elaborately a symbol of partaking of mystic food, divine sustentation, manna, the Logos. The Festival of the Fast (Day of Atonement) is again a turning from the material to get the immaterial sustentation. Philo's mystic elaboration here is very interesting.⁵³

That is, Philo makes every Festival into a sacrament in the sense that it is a visible sign of an invisible, a mystic, grace. The traditional Jewish associations with the Festival are entirely ignored, that the mystic Jew may find in them a means of escape from the material, a medium for partaking of the Logos. How far this had resulted in the modification of ritual we do not know, but I doubt if much modification would have been attempted, or felt desirable. The traditional forms were quite adequate when properly understood. Into the framework of these festivals it now appears we should probably put the reference to the "sacred table" from which those unworthy of receiving mystic secrets must be kept away,⁵⁴ though what was the exact connection we cannot say. It is clear that, in the Jewish Mystery, ritual was not stressed as being essential to the mystic experience in the way it was stressed in the pagan mysteries. But the Mystery which Philo presents is something which is essentially new to "normative" Judaism, and something which opens up a new factor for the study of Christian origins. For here is a religion passionately presented as Judaism, and still filled with much of the Jewish spirit as we have seen in earlier chapters, a religion which had claimed for Judaism all that was most inspiring in pagan religious, philosophic, and, to some extent, ritualistic thought. The highest achievement in life was not obedience to God's detailed laws, good as that still was, but the going out of bodily defilement and confusion, out of the world itself, into something which

was "not of this world." Symbolized in sacred meals and rites, the new Judaism found its reality in the Logos or Sophia which men took into themselves to produce, in this life or the next, a second or immortal birth.

Only two things were necessary to step from this Judaism to the new Christianity. First, it was asserted by Christians that a Greater than Moses had come, in whom the Logos or Spirit was presented in so unique a fashion that the old Saviors faded into mere premonitions.⁵⁵ This figure with its new and sharp human personality took on quickly a number of new characteristics, and raised countless questions which the formulations of Philo had not suggested, such as the problem of the relation of the human to the divine, the relation of the Son to the Father. And the traditional teaching of Jesus of Nazareth gave new ethical meaning to the whole. Secondly, by the fresh and inconceivably vivid experience of his person, and later of his resurrection, the "higher" ideology completely swallowed up the "lower," as Philo tells us it tended to do in his own environment, and the Judaism of the law was done away in the interest of the religion of Grace. I would not minimize the importance of those changes. They made Christianity indeed a new religion, one that Philo would have scorned. But it was a religion which had a measure of preparation among Jews which Eusebius and most of his successors have not adequately presented, and which modern scholars are far from appreciating.

Our concern has been from the beginning with Philo himself. It seems to me that, far from being an obscure figure, he is a man whom we may know as we know few ancient characters. We can see him representing the Jews against the Romans, proud of his people, proud of his traditions, ready to die for them, and too blindly loyal to have thought deeply on problems of general humanity. He was a man of keen intellectual life who saw all that was good in gentile thinking, and, because it was good, believed it must have come to the gentiles from the Jews. Surely everything that was good was in the Torah, he felt, because the Torah was the gift of God through Moses, God's superhuman representative on earth. And so, for all Philo's thousands of pages which only Greek tradition can make intelligible, he was, in his own mind, a Jew who presented to men the true Judaism. That what he and his group were doing would be rejected by Jews, and taken up to form the basis of a religion and civilization in which for centuries the Jews enjoyed, and usually desired, no share, Philo could not have foreseen. We must see him in his own generation, not even a single generation later, see him in the generation when these problems did not exist, when Jesus could have preached and been crucified without Philo's even hearing his name, and when Philo and his associates were simply trying to develop the potentialities of their own religion, not suspecting how the next generation would use that development.

NOTES—CHAPTER VII

1. Colson has a good collection of typical passages on the encyclical studies in his translation of Philo, I, xvi f.
2. *Congr.*, 15–18; cf. *Cher.*, 101–105; *Agr.*, 9, 18.
3. *Congr.*, 19. By a peculiar misunderstanding of the effect of suckers on a tree, it is once represented that the encyclical studies are suckers whose function it is to nourish the young tree, later to be trimmed away: *Agr.*, 18.
4. *Congr.*, 20 f. All of this is entirely in the spirit of the seventh book of Plato's *Republic*.
5. *Cher.*, 8; *Sobr.*, 8.
6. There is little point in listing the variant usages of the term. Of course mystery was essentially the λεγόμενα and δογώμενα for a great many men. But those who have opposed my use of the term mystery may be interested to know of one scholar who told me that after he had resisted my conception for several years he took Liddell and Scott and looked up the usages of such words as μυστήριον, τελέω, and τελετή. He found I was right.
7. *QG*, iii, 10.
8. *QG*, iii, 44.
9. For details, see my *By Light, Light*, 153–166.
10. Gen. xxi, 1.
11. *Cher.*, 45.
12. *Mut.*, 131. I read ὁ ἐνδιάθετος νιός with Wendland and against Colson, though Colson's feeling that ἐνδιάθετος is here in contrast with προφορικός is quite right.
13. *Fug.*, 168.
14. *QG*, iv, 88–146.
15. *QG*, iv, 138.
16. *QG*, iv, 140.
17. They are discussed in my *By Light, Light*, 166–179.
18. *Sacr.*, 9.
19. *Conf.*, 106.
20. *Conf.*, 82.
21. *Mos.*, i, 20 f.
22. *Mos.*, i, 27.
23. *Cher.*, 47; see 43–48.
24. *Conf.*, 95.
25. *Mos.*, i, 155 f.
26. *Mos.*, i, 158 f.; cf. *By Light, Light*, 186, nn. 32–34.
27. *Gig.*, 54 f. Cf. *By Light, Light*, 214, n. 105.
28. *QE*, ii, 46. A few scattered sentences of the Greek are preserved. See J. R. Harris, *Fragments of Philo Judæus* (*Bibl.* 424), 60 f. In the translation I follow the Greek where it is preserved.

29. *QE*, ii, 29.
30. See *By Light, Light*, 223–229.
31. *Virt.*, 73–75.
32. An echo of *Phædrus*, 250c.
33. *Virt.*, 76.
34. *Som.*, i, 164 f.
35. *Migr.*, 121.
36. Cf. Drummond, *Philo Judæus*, II, 191 f., 227 f., 268.
37. *Cher.*, 48.
38. *LA*, iii, 100–103.
39. *By Light, Light*, 95–120.
40. The matter is quite complicated in Philo; see *By Light, Light*, 221 f.
41. See above, pp. 153, 156 f.
42. *QG*, iv, 77.
43. *QG*, iv, 78.
44. *QG*, iv, 83 f.
45. *Phædo*, 69 A, D. See my “Literal Mystery in Hellenistic Judaism,” *Quantulacumque, Studies presented to Professor Kir-sopp Lake* (London, 1937), 227–241. Socrates expected literally to be saved by this philosophic mystery in the next life.
46. See the preceding note.
47. Pierre Boyancé, *Le Culte des muses chez les philosophiques grecs*, Paris, 1937 (*Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome*, CXLI).
48. *Spec.*, i, 2–12.
49. *QE*, ii, 2. Harris, *Fragments of Philo*, 49. Philo, however, wanted circumcision kept for the Jews. In *Migr.*, 92, Philo repeats this allegory of circumcision, but says the rite must nonetheless be observed.
50. *Spec.*, ii, 56–70.
51. *Spec.*, ii, 145–149.
52. *Spec.*, ii, 150–161. Cf. *Congr.*, 161–168.
53. *Spec.*, ii, 193–203.
54. See my *By Light, Light*, 260 f.
55. Such as Abraham in Paul’s allegories.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

SINCE the publication of the *Bibliography*, the need of a beginner is rather for a brief selected bibliography than for a large number of titles. Völker's review of Philonic scholarship, though I must frequently disagree with his judgments, is on the whole so excellent that that ground need not be gone over again for some time. Accordingly, I append here only a note rather than a bibliographical study.

There is no complete edition of Philo. Indispensable for its textual apparatus is the *editio major* of Leopold Cohn and Paul Wendland, *Philonis opera quae supersunt*, Berlin, Georg Reimer, 1896–1930, 7 volumes in 8 (*Bibl.* 431).¹ This contains all the treatises of the *Exposition* and the *Allegory*, the political and a few miscellaneous treatises. Volume VII in two parts contains an invaluable Word Index by Hans Leisegang to the treatises of the first six volumes. The student will use this Index constantly for what he will find there, but must be warned that it is by no means complete. It omits not only many instances of the words listed, but a great many very important words altogether; accordingly, a negative conclusion is never possible from the Index.

The student who is not going so far as to need a textual apparatus will find the Loeb edition of Philo,

1. The *Bibliography* number is here given after titles for the convenience of those who wish to look up reviews, and, in case of editions, the contents of individual volumes.

with its excellent texts and translations, most convenient (*Bibl.* 437). The edition, begun by F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, is being carried on by Mr. Colson to include the same texts as are in the Cohn and Wendland edition. At the present writing eight of the total ten volumes have been published.

A new edition of the *In Flaccum* by Herbert Box, London, 1939, has the text and translation of that treatise with excellent introduction and notes which are much fuller than the Loeb series allows. It is especially valuable now since the Loeb edition has not yet reached that treatise. Helpful notes and introductions to the treatises are also to be found in the German translation, *Die Werke Philos von Alexandria in deutscher Übersetzung*, edited at first by L. Cohn, and continued by I. Heinemann, Breslau, 1900–37, six volumes (*Bibl.* 492). This series is likewise still incomplete. É. Bréhier's *Philon: Commentaire allégorique des saintes lois*, Paris, 1909 (*Bibl.* 433), gives, with notes, the Greek text and a French translation of the three books of *LA*. The *Bibliography*, under "Editions and Translations," will show a number of other important studies on special works, likewise Section VIII, "Studies on Individual Treatises of Philo." For example, F. C. Conybeare's edition of *On the Contemplative Life*, Oxford, 1895 (*Bibl.* 429), is invaluable.

For the works of Philo preserved only in Armenian the editions of Aucher contain Latin translations (*Bibl.* 440, 441). These Latin translations have been twice republished, and are more easily to be found in

the editions of Philo by [C. E. Richter], Leipzig, 1828–30, volumes VI–VIII (*Bibl.* 413), and in the reprint of this in the Tauchnitz texts, Leipzig, 1851–53 (reprinted 1880–93), volumes VI–VIII (*Bibl.* 420).

The English translation of Philo by C. D. Yonge in the Bohn series, 1854–55, four volumes (*Bibl.* 475), is useful only in its last two volumes where it supplements the Loeb translation and Box's *In Flaccum*.

Selection of studies on Philo is much more difficult, for here the literature grows very large, and in any special investigation the full list of titles presented by the *Bibliography* would have to be examined. The most important recent larger studies of Philo have already been discussed (see above, pp. 12–19). To these should be added for early consultation the works of E. Schürer, *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Zeitgeschichte*, Leipzig, 1874 (later editions: *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi*, Leipzig, 1886–90; *ibid.*, 1901–11; English translation (of the 2d edition) by John MacPherson, Sophia Taylor, and Peter Christie: *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, Edinburgh, 1890–93) (*Bibl.* 593); J. Drummond, *Philo Judæus; or, the Jewish-Alexandrian Philosophy in its Development and Completion*, London, 1888, two vols. (*Bibl.* 607); E. Caird, "The Philosophy and Theology of Philo," *The Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers*, Glasgow, 1904, II, 184–209. (The Gifford Lectures delivered in the University of

Glasgow in Sessions 1900–1 and 1901–2) (*Bibl.* 621); and É. Bréhier, *Les Idées philosophiques et religieuses de Philon d'Alexandrie*, Paris, 1908, pp. xiv, 336, 2d edition (reprint with revised bibliography), 1925 (*Bibl.* 626). For reasons best known to themselves the editors of the Pauly-Wissowa *Encyclopädie für Altertumswissenschaft* decided to ignore Philo Judæus and at the last moment to exclude H. Leisegang's article.



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